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Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Meets Butrus-Ghali; World Bank To Give $20 Million Loan

JN0305071496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat called on the United Nations to play a bigger role in supporting the current Middle East peace process.

This came during a meeting between President 'Arafat and UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali in New York. President 'Arafat also called on the United Nations to support the Palestinian people in light of Israel's continued military siege on Palestine.

The National Authority [NA] and the World Bank signed an agreement in Washington under which the bank will give the NA a $20 million loan without conditions to develop the Palestinian countryside through the digging of wells, opening of agricultural roads, and establishment of projects that employ the Palestinian labor force.

The agreement was signed in the presence of President 'Arafat and World Bank President James Wolfensohn. Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat signed the agreement for the Palestinian side and the head of World Bank's Middle East and North Africa department signed for the World Bank.

Palestinian Affairs: Ghawshah on 5 May Final Stage Negotiations

NC0305091596 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 3 May 96

[Telephone interview with Palestinian Labor Minister Samir Ghawshah, member of the Palestine National Council and the PLO Executive Committee, by 'Adil 'Abd-al-Tawwab; place and date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-Tawwab] Welcome to this dialogue.

[Ghawshah] Thank you.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Have you finalized preparations to start the final stage negotiations on Sunday 5 May?

[Ghawshah] Knowing that there is a set date for starting the final stage negotiations, it was only natural for the Palestinian side or the Palestinian Authority and the PLO to confirm the importance of starting negotiations on the various issues of the final stage at the set time. This is why the various Palestinian committees have been preparing files relating to the final stage negotiations. We are ready to start these negotiations immediately and at the time set for them, particularly since they address essential issues that affect the Palestinian people. These issues relate to Jerusalem, the refugees, settlements, the borders, and other pending issues at the transitional stage.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Could you say that the talks in Washington will give the green light to these negotiations?

[Ghawshah] There is no doubt that the United States and President Clinton are the major sponsors of the peace process. It was expected that preparatory meetings would take place to guarantee a start to negotiations on the final stage, meetings at which all these things would be discussed. This is why we, in the Palestinian Authority, wanted to hold talks with the brothers in Egypt and with President Husni Mubarak before heading to Washington and then meet with President Clinton to discuss all the issues, particularly the final stage negotiations.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Some say Israel will not negotiate in an effective manner during the coming session on 5 May and that real negotiations will not start until after the Israeli elections. Is the Palestinian side prepared to overcome any obstacles Israel places before the negotiations?

[Ghawshah] There have been contacts in the past few days and there have been numerous Israeli pretexts. But the Palestinian side tried everything possible to start negotiations on the date set for them. We realize that the first stage of the negotiations will be preparatory and governed by the Israeli pretext, which is that Israeli officials are occupied with the election process. But we believe the various specialized committees between the two sides will start negotiations on the set date. We consider this the beginning of a stage that might go on for a long or short time, depending on the political developments that follow, on Israel's commitment to the agreements it signed, and on the active and effective role of the sponsors of the peace process, particularly the United States.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Have the members of the Palestinian delegation that will take part in the first round of these negotiations been named?

[Ghawshah] There are specialized committees for this purpose. A decision will be issued later by President 'Arafat naming those who will participate in these negotiations and appointing the delegation members. We know there are numerous committees that have been entrusted with these duties and that will continue to follow up this issue.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Let us discuss the city of Hebron and the Israeli withdrawal from there. Hebron is the only city left from which Israel has not withdrawn. There have been reports saying that withdrawal from Hebron will take place at the same time as the beginning of the final stage negotiations. Is there anything new on this issue?

[Ghawshah] First, Israel has never adhered to the dates set for redeployment. Despite our agreeing on a schedule, much of which Israel has already implemented, it has not adhered to the date set for withdrawal from Hebron, using various excuses and pretexts. But we have said, and confirmed during the past few weeks in meetings with the Israelis, particularly during the meeting between President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Peres, which was held at the Erez crossing, that we need to begin the deployment of international forces on a temporary basis. Norway has already sent observers to pave the way for making the various arrangements. Two joint Israeli and Palestinian committees have been formed, one dealing with security and the other with the civil arrangements that are to be made in Hebron. We are hoping and working on making Israel commit to withdrawal from Hebron, like the rest of the Palestinian cities. We realize that there are attempts to dodge this commitment under various excuses, some of which are the active role of the settlers and the elections. But we note the importance of adhering to commitments and withdrawing from Hebron as soon as possible.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Do you have any doubts that withdrawal [from Hebron] will take place before the Israeli elections?

[Ghawshah] There are signs that this will not happen. There is stalling in the implementation of the steps that have been agreed upon. This is not strange for Israel, which has stalled and delayed much in implementing the agreement. We will try to make Israel adhere to this, while realizing how difficult this will be.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Dear listeners, at the end of this meeting, we thank Palestinian Labor Minister Samir Ghawshah and always welcome him as a guest on our radio.

[Ghawshah] Thank you.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Israeli, Palestinian West Bank Commanders Meet in Bethlehem

TA0205172196 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 2 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Gabi Ofir, commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the West Bank, met in Bethlehem this evening with Brigadier General Hajj Isma'il, commander of the Palestinian Police in the West Bank. The two discussed the continued implementation of the Oslo accord articles on redeployment and other issues. This meeting precedes the imminent talks on the final arrangement in the territories.

Algeria

Algeria: Daily Reports 20 Deaths in GIA Factional Clash

LD0205132996 Paris France-2 Teletext in French 1246 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Violent clashes between rival members of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) resulted in at least 20 deaths near Blida (south of Algiers), the newspaper EL WATAN reported on Thursday [2 May].

The fatal clashes were triggered by disagreements between Djamel Zitouni and his rival, "Hadj" Kartali, two figures in the GIA.

People with injuries were reportedly taken to one of the GIA's underground hideouts, where the armed movement may, moreover, be holding the French monks kidnapped on 27 March.

Egypt

Egypt: Turkish Minister Meets Musa, Comments on Pact With Israel

NC0205140396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1310 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara, 2 May (MENA)—Turkish Foreign Minister Emre Gonensay has denied that the military agreement his country has signed with Israel targets any regional country. He said Turkey's stance on this agreement is clear and specific: It is an agreement for training purposes, not a strategic one. In a statement to a MENA correspondent in Ankara after his meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Gonensay said President Suleyman Demirel emphasized this to Musa during their meeting today. Musa is currently visiting Ankara.

We hope the Arab countries will not build their stances on inaccurate information, said Gonensay. He noted that Foreign Minister Musa will hold talks with the Turkish defense minister on details of this agreement. He added that his country is eager to establish normal ties with Egypt and all Arab countries, noting the profound historic relations between Turkey and Egypt.

Egypt: Papers Fault U.S. Attitude About Events in Lebanon

NC0305103996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0510 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 May (MENA)—The Cairo newspapers continue to comment on the repercussions and implications of the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon. In two articles, the chief editors of AL-AHRAM and AL-AKHBAR describe the aggression as a dirty war and criticize the U.S. complacency toward this barbarous onslaught.

Under the headline "Lessons From the Battle of Lebanon," AL-AHRAM's chief editor, Ibrahim Nafi', says in his weekly article that Israel's two-week dirty war on Lebanon should not be allowed to pass as a mere wave of intense Israeli violence. Nor should we accept Israel's claim that it was no more than a fierce reaction to Hizballah's attacks on northern Israel.

Nafi' adds: We must not allow things to revert to their old situation in the Middle East, simply because the United States and France succeeded in concluding a cease-fire, which everyone knows is temporary and fragile.

The writer believes the cease-fire agreement deals with surface issues and procedures but does not remedy the core and roots of the crisis. He says that Lebanon's recent battle requires careful examination to draw conclusions and lessons that can benefit the Arabs.

He says the first lesson to learn from this aggression and its attendant diplomatic efforts is the importance of forging ahead earnestly and resolutely with the peace process until a situation is reached in which every country adheres to its peace commitments.

He adds that special attention must be devoted to the Syrian and Lebanese fronts to ensure an Israeli withdrawal from their occupied territories and facilitate progress toward a comprehensive regional peace, particularly one that includes the establishment of a Palestinian state on Palestinian land.

Nafi' says the second lesson is that Israel would not have acted as it did had it not enjoyed a strong feeling of invincibility and absence of deterrent. There were no restrictions on its movements or ceiling on its actions.

The writer believes the Arabs have a mission to fulfill: Regardless of the ups and downs in the peace process, they must restore a military balance in the region in a way that sufficiently deters Israeli behavior.

He declares: We must not accept Israel's absolute right to use its military power in any way it wants whenever it wants.

The fourth lesson [no third lesson specified, as received], he continues, is that we failed to turn the seething anger the Arabs felt during those two weeks into specific deterrent steps that can limit the original action. He urges renewed efforts to close Arab ranks, saying that at the very least this can constitute a political and diplomatic deterrent to Israeli and U.S. calculations.

In expounding the fourth lesson, he notes that 64 countries abstained from voting on a UN resolution condemning Israel while 54 countries did not attend the voting session. He declares that this means most countries have decided to avert their eyes and close their ears and refuse to see or hear anything about the issue.

Nafi' adds: This might be a consequence of U.S. influence, the hard economic conditions of most Third World and East European countries, or Arab weakness.

Under the headline "The Honor of Serving Israel," AL-AKHBAR Chief Editor Jalal Duwaydar writes: After following up Shim'on Peres' visit to Washington, which followed the Lebanese cease-fire, and after listening to Clinton's cheap hypocrisy on Israel, I can only feel pity for the sole superpower, whose positions are not appropriate to its stature or the role we want it to play.

Duwaydar adds: To clarify this disgraceful U.S. attitude, I will cite an editorial published by the Israeli newspaper YEDI'OT AHARONOT. It says Clinton has entered Israeli history as the first U.S. President to behave like an obedient boy who does not refuse any request by Israel or its government. Elsewhere in the same issue the paper quotes Israeli opposition leaders saying that Peres visited Washington to get the backing of Clinton and his administration in the elections scheduled for late May.

The writer concludes: The White House was right to deny this charge on the grounds that U.S. backing was not intended as interference in the Israeli elections as much as it was an attempt to solicit Israeli support and Jewish votes for Clinton and the Democratic Party in the U.S. election. How many crimes are being perpetrated in the name of democracy?! Democracy has become the victim of the unfair U.S. policy.

Morocco

Morocco: King Hassan Interiewed on Peace, Relations With France

LD0205220596 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1819 GMT 2 May 96

[Interview with King Hassan II of Morocco by Jean-Luc Mano and Alain Duhamel in Morocco; date not given; from the "Invite Special" weekly interview program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Announcer] Our special guest this evening is His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco, who is due to pay an official visit to France on 6 May.

[Mano] Good evening and welcome to our Special Guest feature. Our special guest is exceptional, indeed, since he is His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco. Good evening Sir.

[Hassan] Good evening.

[Mano] You will be travelling to Paris in a few days' time. French-Moroccan relations have had their ups and downs. Does this mark the end of a quarrel, the dawn of a new era, a new departure in French-Moroccan relations?

[Hassan] Listen, even the most united families always have their ups and downs. Overall, for a long time now there have been no troughs in our relations with France, and I am very happy to visit your country in the kind of climate that has prevailed in the relations between our two peoples first and foremost, and between the president of the republic and myself. [passage omitted]

[Mano] We will talk again of French-Moroccan relations later. Let us talk first about the Middle East. Following the Qana massacre in southern Lebanon, and despite the political accomodation that has been reached, do you believe that, psychologically, the chances of peace remain intact?

[Hassan] Well, it depends first and foremost on where you are. If you are peripherically located in relation to the site of the catastrophe, or the disaster, then memories will fade more easily. No, I think that in that incident matters were taken somewhat too far, and I wonder if this did not happen deliberately. Because it was known that the source of the shelling could be traced, people knew where the shells were coming from.

[Duhamel] Meaning that certain parties are trying to sabotage the peace process?

[Hassan] I would ask everyone to be patient and wait three or four years to read the memoirs that will be written about that chapter of the Middle East's history. I think that a lot will come to the surface then.

[Duhamel] A few days ago...

[Hassan, adding afterthought] ...coming from others, coming from others [memoirs of others]

[Duhamel] Still on the same subject, a few days ago there were two significant developments. On the one hand the PLO renounced certain articles of its charter which called for the destruction of Israel; and, on the other, Shim'on Peres's Labor Party accepted the principle of Palestinian self-determination. Is this a kind of balance that you would regard as equitable? It certainly has taken a long time to reach.

[Hassan] It did not accept self-determination, it accepted the existence of a Palestinian state.

[Duhamel] Yes, which means Palestinian self-determination.

[Hassan] Only a few months ago no such words would have been heard from the Israeli prime minister. Even if he nourished such thoughts deep down, he would certainly not utter them other than within a very, very restricted circle. In my estimation a balance has been reached on the basis of which things must now move forward.

[Mano] You have personally done much to get this peace process going. Many people now believe that electoral success for Shim'on Peres at the end of this month is an indispensable condition for the continuation of peace process. Is that how you feel too?

[Hassan] It is indispensable for the peace process, to safeguard it, and to move it forward, undeniably. Because, from the outset the rules of the game have been clear, the ideas have been clear, and the prospects, the projections, are very clear to us all.

It is a certain fact that, unless there was a radical change in the Likud party, there would be a lot less grounds for optimism there.

[Duhamel] If Shim'on Peres and Labor win at the end of this month, would one be in cloud-cuckoo-land to imagine a comprehensive regional peace, say, before the turn of the century, and involving Syria and Lebanon too?

[Hassan] Between now and the year 2000?

[Duhamel] Yes.

[Hassan] I think you would have to be truly very lazy or of very bad will indeed, not to achieve it between now and the year 2000.

[Mano] Setting peace agreements, politics and diplomacy aside for one moment, do you believe that the next century will usher in the paths of a Jewish-Arab friendship, or understanding, at any rate?

[Hassan] It must. It is necessary. Treaties by themselves have never been worth the paper they're written on. Living together is what truly matters. And true living together, street by street, house by house, such as may truly bring about the peace that must be the peace of the hearts, the peace of the cultures, the peace of habit. People must become used to living together.

We must get there. But I believe that one of the indispensable provisos for reaching that stage is the settlement of the Palestinian question.

[Duhamel] Regarding that eventual peaceful cohabitation between Muslims and Jews, do you believe that someone like you has a particular role to play, signs to give out, symbolic gestures?

[Hassan] Not me directly, but it is true that my Moroccans — as I call them — down there, and there are arouund 100,000 of them, have more than symbolic gestures to make, and they do so. They do so through their culture, through their behavior. Though it is true, I know, that quite a few of them traditionally vote right wing. [passage omitted]

[Duhamel] Another issue in which the French are interested and which worries them a lot is the rise of religious fundamentalism. The title of a recent book published by Jean Daniel, for example, is "Is God a Fundamentalist?" Do you think Morocco can escape the rise of fundamentalism?

[Hassan] No, there is no doubt that fundamentalism periodically rises in Morocco. This has been the case for centuries. It is a periodical fever. There has not been a century in our history without a bout of fundamentalist fever. However, the fever never surpassed the boundaries of religious debate. The debate was always about religion, like the debate there was within the French church a couple of years ago and in which one of the parties taking part was called fundamentalist. This kind of fundamentalism has nothing to do with fundamentalism as it is depicted today all over the world: violent, perpetrator of massacres. No, we do not see things this way [in Morocco].

[Mano] Has the fact that you are Commander of the Faithful in Morocco helped the country to have a more peaceful and quiet kind of Islam than in many other countries?

[Hassan] Not only me. It has helped my ancestors.

[Mano] This is what I meant.

[Hassan] It helped us all because one of the principles in the Koran is that the people of the Book [Christians, Muslims, and Jews] who live in your country have the right to the same kind of protection and have the same rights as the Muslims. They are the People of the Book.

[Duhamel] So how do you explain the simultaneous rise of fundamentalism in many Islamic countries? Why now and why at the same time?

[Hassan] First, because I think there is this new aspect of pace. Life is changing at a very fast pace and we are forced to accept this society and way of life as it is. It is really a matter of take it or leave it, unfortunately. The West has arrived unto us this way: it smashed its way through. Take it or leave it. We cannot pick up only what we choose to, we do not have such a choice. We were forced to accept it as it is. There are things which we cannot accept, there are types of behavior that we cannot accept.

[Mano] An example?

[Hassan] A sort of exhibitionism, for example, in the way people dress. This is something which still shocks us. The fact that homosexuals are allowed to live together: these are things which...

[Duhamel, interrupting] Do you think these are factors which explain why fundamentalism is on the rise?

[Hassan] It is an attack.

[Duhamel] How do you explain that two neighboring countries such as Morocco and Algeria are not confronted to the same degree of fundamentalism?

[Hassan] It is a matter of different kinds of society. One must not forget that Morocco had the chance — this is something which both President Mitterrand and General de Gaulle, may God bless their souls, understood well — to be the only Arab country independent from Turkey. We put up resistance for 350 years. So the reason is that our society is different.

[Mano] How should fundamentalism be fought today?

[Hassan] Look, there is fundamentalism and what fundamentalists do. Fundamentalist acts should be punished for what they are. If they shout, we should shout. If they resort to violence, we should use means to halt this violence. If they use ideas, we must fight them with ideas.

[Duhamel] What can the solution be for a country, such as France, which is confronted with fundamentalism? What is a good strategy and what are the mistakes to be avoided?

[Hassan] Fundamentalism is not a problem specific to French society. The issues are born outside France, imported into France and coloured with fundamentalism. They are not French issues by nature and I cannot prescribe a cure because they are political issues imported into France and with an added spice of fundamentalism.

[Mano] The French position on immigration is to say that France cannot let more people in, given the economic and social situation. When you see illegal immigrants expelled to their respective countries, do you think France has the right to do that?

[Hassan] Quite frankly I cannot ask France to take away jobs, food, education, and health care from her children to favor children who are not hers, because I know what I myself would do at home: I would put Moroccans first. So I cannot [word indistinct]. What shocked me a little bit was to see that they arrested people who had taken shelter inside a church. This made me...[pauses]...never mind.

[Mano] You have often mentioned examples of lack of understanding between France and the Islamic world. Isn't there at the heart of this a lack of understanding of the fact that France considers secularism as a fundamental value whereas this idea of secularism is not accepted by the Islam?

[Hassan] France was lucky in its relationship with Islam and with Arab countries because Napoleon Bonaparte was born before Jules Ferry, the father of secularism, [prime minister in 1880-1881 and 1883-1885]. Bonaparte went to Egypt before Jules Ferry. The Institut du Caire, the respect he had for Muslims, for mosques: this is where it all started. France settled down [in the Arab world] under Bonaparte. It could not have done the same under Jules Ferry.

[Mano] Sorry to interrupt you: Please allow me to insist on the issue of secularism for Muslim immigrants who do not accept that idea. Do you think domestic law should prevail?

[Hassan] When I am at my place for a couple of weeks in Paris, I respect the law of the country where I am and the law of secularism must be respected as well.

[Duhamel] When there are misunderstandings between the French and the Moroccans — there are always misunderstandings at certain times — who should make the greater effort to understand the other?

[Hassan] I think that it should be you, because we know you better than you know us.

[Duhamel] Can you explain that?

[Hassan] You have not been to Moroccan schools whereas we have been to French schools: if not really to French schools we had French teachers. Thus we know your language, your history, your society. You do not know anything about us. It is the time for you to make an effort. You must turn the tables. You must make a little step [toward us].

[Duhamel] Do you have the feeling that we do not take enough interest?

[Hassan] Pardon.

[Mano] Do you have the feeling that we do not take enough interest?

[Hassan] No, no, no, far from this. I consider that laziness can sometimes be natural and come instinctively. It is a natural laziness which is called the law of the smallest effort.

[Mano] On another subject, in France, at present, there is very weak [economic] growth and then there is a high level of unemployment, too high even at a level which is uncommon in France. In Morocco, what is the rate of growth and level of unemployment?

[Hassan] You know, I think that it is better not to live with eyes fixed on charts of rates of growth and levels of unemployment because we know that there can be financial miracles without economic miracles.

[Duhamel] A question which we often ask in France: Is it possible to develop the economy of a country like yours, as you want to do, without at the same time developing democracy? Putting it in an other way, can one develop initiative without developing individual freedom?

[Hassan] One cannot develop entrepreneurship without developing individual freedom, and by the way there is no law in our country — no constitutional law, no law, no regulation — which denies or limits the right to own property.

[Mano] Do you not have the impression that political freedom has fallen behind as regards economic progress?

[Hassan] No, not at all. Thank God we have kept up-to-date on a political level, in terms of all codes of international law.

[Mano] You feel that you are progressing at the same rate in the spheres of political democracy and economic modernization?

[Hassan] Listen, we cannot ask Europe to be our partners. We have signed with Europe and the European parliament will vote on this. We cannot...[pauses]... by the way they would not have accepted. We cannot vote and be with Europe having two faces: the apparent Morocco and the real Morocco. I think that the fact that they wanted to be partners with us proves that we are of healthy form and mind.

[Mano] In France, you know — we said we would speak frankly — several people, intellectuals, groups and associations are critical of you for not respecting human rights. Do you, when you listen to them, sometimes understand them, take their criticisms into account?

[Hassan] Of those who talk of this in France?

[Mano] Yes.

[Hassan] Ultimately, I no longer take it into account. I would say no.

[Mano] Do you think that it is completely unjust or do you think that sometimes in the past they have been right? Do you think mistakes were made?

[Hassan] I think they will have a car crash because they look too much in the rear view mirror.

[Duhamel] As you said in your interview with LE FIGARO, several hundreds of political prisoners were freed two years ago.

[Hassan] No, not political prisoners.

[Duhamel] You do not consider them political prisoners?

[Hassan] They opposed the return of [Western] Sahara to Morocco, which is our Alsace-Loraine.

[Duhamel] So let us say that you do not consider them political prisoners whereas they consider themselves political prisoners.

[Hassan] That is right.

[Duhamel] Can you assure us that there are no prisoners of this kind right now?

[Hassan] There aren't.

[Duhamel] There aren't any?

[Hassan] Absolutely not.

[Mano] When do you think you did the right thing, when you freed them or when you jailed them?

[Hassan] I beg your pardon?

[Mano] When do you think you did the right thing, when you freedthem or when you jailed them?

[Hassan] I was right twice.

[Mano] Twice.

[Hassan] The first time when I made sure they would not harm their country. This helped them think better and, as a result, they wrote to me that they had understood how things really were. Now they are no longer a danger and they have been freed.

[Mano] Your Majesty, you are proud of the fact that the press is free in Morocco, something one notices immediately when reading the papers in this country. At the same time you have forbidden the sale in Morocco of a newspaper like JEUNE AFRIQUE because it has criticized you and you have expelled a French journalist. Do you think this was the right thing to do in principle, even if the newspaper and the journalist were wrong?

[Hassan] Yes, it is a matter of principle, as you said. What I think is that this is infinitely less important than a discussion on Mr. Peres's, President Clinton's, and Mr Yeltsin's chances of being re-elected.

[Duhamel] Do you think you need an iron fist to make your country progress, as General de Gaulle used to say?

[Hassan] No, no.

[Duhamel] No?

[Hassan] No. My father — may God bless his soul — used to tell me that Morocco is a lion which must be walked with a short leash.

[Mano] You have launched a campaign against corruption which, as everybody can see, is being very successful. Will the campaign target everyone, I mean, will it target anyone, whatever his social status, his political situation and possible protections? Is it going to reach everybody, provided there are reasons to prosecute them?

[Hassan] It must be said that corruption was not born yesterday, it was created with the earth. Corruption, illegal trade, the trade of one's own body, are the oldest activities of this world. There would be no corrupted people without people who corrupt. I do not intend to become a Don Quixote in order to...[pauses]...No, I think this would be a waste of time and would traumatize people and put...[pauses]...from time to time it is necessary to call people to order. They must be reminded that there are laws and rules to be respected, especially now that we have accepted the challenge of free trade within the GATT, of transparent business and trade methods. We cannot ask to play with the adults and behave like kids.

[Duhamel] Another campaign you have started is the fight against drugs. Do you think you are reaching your goals in this field? Have you managed to stop local producers or not?

[Hassan] No. In order to get rid of local producers there must be a change of crops. We are working and we hope Europe will help us. We had many talks with the Europeans and with France in particular. What we have done is to put the brakes on drug trafficking and now we have the time to prepare ourselves while other [traffickers'] networks are being created.

[Mano] And how long do you need to tackle production?

[Hassan] I think that in two or three years we can...

[Duhamel, interrupting] With some help?

[Hassan] With some help because in a whole section of the kingdom they will have to change the crops they grow.

[Mano] You will meet President Chirac soon. Do you think France makes mistakes in its relationship with Morocco, as far as trade is concerned for example? Does France behave as it should?

[Hassan] No, it does not make any mistakes. No, no. On the contrary it is very gentle with us and we are gentle with France as well. Even when we have diverging opinions we never argue as enemies. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Bahrain: Police Fire Rubber Bullets To Break Up Demonstration

NC0305064496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0230 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to AFP, unrest has been reported in the capital of Bahrain, where scores of people staged demonstrations in southwest Manama.

The Bahraini police reportedly used plastic bullets to disperse the demonstrators and arrested 15 of them. Bahraini sources stated that they were released an hour later.

[In its report, Paris AFP in English at 2018 GMT on 2 May reports the following: "Police fired rubber bullets Thursday [2 May] to disperse a protest by some 150 Shiite Muslim demonstrators in the al-Diraz district, southwest of the Bahraini capital, witnesses said.

["The demonstrators shouted anti-government slogans and burned tyres, before anti-riot police intervened, firing rubber bullets and breaking up the protest, they said. There were no injuries reported.

["Witnesses said around 15 people were briefly detained.

["A car repair garage and a grocer's shop — both run by foreigners — were set ablaze earlier Thursday in al-Nuwaydirat and Sitrah, two Shiite districts also south of Manama, witnesses said.

["Bahrain has been hit by anti-government protests since December 1994, led mainly by Shiites demanding a restoration of the parliament suspended by the Sunni Muslim-led authorities in 1975."]

Bahrain: Foreign Minister Interviewed on Unrest, Peace, Iran

NC0205191996 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 14 Apr 96 p 14

[Interview with Bahraini Foreign Minister Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah by Jubran Tuwayni in Manama; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Tuwayni] What is happening in Bahrain? How do you explain the reports disseminated by international news media about the situation?

[Al Khalifah] We hope the press will find out directly about the situation in Bahrain and not believe rumors from abroad. There were some regrettable incidents to which Bahrain is not accustomed, but they are not as big as they are portrayed in the media, especially the known media sources that seek to destabilize us. Bahrain is a developing country and some groups are working against its stability and development. These groups are working full time, using terrorism as a means to reach power.

[Tuwayni] Do you think Bahrain is a target of a conspiracy, or are these incidents part of preparations by some parties to gain influence in the Gulf?

[Al Khalifah] Some foreign parties generally want to shake stability in the Gulf. They are trying to take advantage of any favorable circumstances in any Gulf country to serve this purpose. I think the groups that instigate incidents in Bahrain — and we have repeatedly said this — are receiving foreign financial, political, and media support. This is directed not against Bahrain in particular, but against stability in the entire Gulf region, as has happened in other parts of the Arab world. Therefore, we must learn the lesson and analyze the problem correctly and deal with it. Unrest in this region would reflect negatively on the Arab world and weaken its position in general.

[Tuwayni] Do you think we are now on the threshold of a period similar to the one that preceded the second Gulf war and the invasion of Kuwait?

[Al Khalifah] I do not think so. But I believe some foreign parties feel they are now in a weaker position, and therefore, they want to weaken others. They are using some local groups to do this.

[Tuwayni] What do you mean by foreign parties? Do they border the Gulf or are they from outside the region?

[Al Khalifah] Maybe these states border the Gulf or maybe they are farther away. But they support the trend of extremism and the use of violence. We believe there is harmony among these groups as they work to shake stability in the region.

[Tuwayni] Are these parties able to achieve their objectives?

[Al Khalifah] I think they will not succeed, because there is enough awareness in the region and a prosperity no other part of the world has seen. We take much pride in the progress we have made in the past 30 years. But these parties and forces do not want to see cooperation between the states of the region and their allies.

[Tuwayni] Do you think the peace negotiations have anything to do with what is happening in Bahrain, with the objective of such a link being to establish relations between Israel and most of the Arab countries?

[Al Khalifah] The peace process is continuing, and we have supported it since it was launched in Madrid. We hope the negotiations will continue on all tracks, including the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. We are working to make this process a comprehensive one. But some states, undoubtedly, are not supporting this peace process as they should; indeed, they are fighting the peace process.

[Tuwayni] Do you think the states that are fighting peace are behind what is happening in Bahrain?

[Al Khalifah] These states are against the current peace process. They support the extremist trends in the region and seek to foil relations between the Arab world and the nearby countries.

[Tuwayni] You attended the Sharm al-Shaykh Summit, did you discuss terrorism in the entire region or in a specific area?

[Al Khalifah] Yes, we discussed that. His highness the heir apparent's speech at the Sharm al-Shaykh summit noted that terrorism does not concern any specific country, but must be considered in general. At the recent meeting in Washington on the level of experts, the Bahraini representative broached this issue and said verbatim that what is happening in Bahrain must be described as terrorism because that is the proper term when civilians are the victims.

[Tuwayni] Did you feel that the Western countries consider what is happening in Bahrain to be foreign interference and terrorism, or a domestic affair?

[Al Khalifah] I believe that the Western nations fully understand the situation in Bahrain. In their contacts with us, these countries admitted that there is foreign interference. In addition, the Gulf countries adopted a clear stance on this issue, as stated in several statements.

[Tuwayni] What about the British Government's official stance, particularly as we are aware that the Bahraini opposition uses London as a basic media center?

[Al Khalifah] The stands of the British and the U.S. governments are clear. They have denounced all forms of terrorism. Regarding Britain, we differ with it over protecting these people and allowing them to use London as a media center to support terrorist operations in Bahrain. We discussed this issue with British officials and demanded that these people stop exploiting British laws to interfere in Bahrain's domestic affairs.

[Tuwayni] What was the British officials' response?

[Al Khalifah] They replied that their laws do not allow them to do more than what they are doing. I believe that the problem does not concern Bahrain alone, as there are many countries that make the same demand on Britain—that it distinguish between those who are calling for progress and development for their countries and those who sponsor and encourage terrorism.

[Tuwayni] How would you describe Bahrain's ties with Iran?

[Al Khalifah] They are neighborly relations and we have political and economic relations as well. However, we must comment on Iran's policy toward Bahrain when it launches organized media campaigns supporting those who carry out terrorist operations in Bahrain. When we tell the Iranians what we feel, they respond that the press and radio in Iran are free.

[Tuwayni] Regarding the Gulf situation in general, what is your assessment of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] and its future prospects following the recent reconciliation?

[Al Khalifah] We believe that the GCC has been and still is the most important political entity in the Gulf region in recent history. The GCC is working to build a strategic position in the region. The GCC constitutes the future framework for the regional countries and their cooperation in the political, economic, and defense spheres. The GCC has achieved several things. Our goal is to enter the 21st century with a strong and solid GCC. Naturally there are some obstacles, and issues that are not positive have been raised. However, I believe that the GCC is the best cooperation body of the countries of this region.

[Tuwayni] What about the reconciliations?

[Al Khalifah] We hope that all differences among the regional countries will be solved and that the reconciliation between Qatar and Saudi Arabia will serve as an example for the other countries. We hope that the pending problems will be solved within the framework, logic, and spirit of one family.

[Tuwayni] Do you consider the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] ready for the peace phase?

[Al Khalifah] Actually we have begun this phase. If you have noticed, the trade balance among the region's countries has increased many fold. This is a big economic step; it is based on further facilitation of trade dealings among the GCC member states.

As for the peace process, we have been part of it since it began in Madrid and we have participated in all the multilateral committees.

The GCC has been active in the process since the beginning and we are advancing it to make it comprehensive and fair. In short, we are ready and acting to keep pace with the natural speed of the process with slow and deliberate steps. Here I would like to emphasize that the Lebanese and Syrian sides in the peace process are very important to Bahrain.

[Tuwayni] Is it possible that Bahrain will receive Israeli economic delegations like other regional countries have?

[Al Khalifah] We have begun normalization, and the Israelis came here to participate in a conference on environment as part of the peace process. However, we believe that there are steps that should be taken so that the normalization can keep pace with the progress of the peace process and none of the processes will end up ahead of the other.

[Tuwayni] Do you expect 1996 to be the year a peace deal on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks will be signed?

[Al Khalifah] I believe that this year will witness advanced stages on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

[Tuwayni] Do you think that the Israeli elections will affect the [peace] process?

[Al Khalifah] Of course I do. If the Likud bloc wins, peace will be harder to attain.

[Tuwayni] More difficult to sign or more difficult in terms of the Israeli conditions?

[Al Khalifah] More difficult in terms of intransigence.

[Tuwayni] What are your predictions on the outcome of the Israeli elections? Do you foresee potential operations by Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], from which Likud will benefit?

[Al Khalifah] There are parties on both sides that do not want the peace process to succeed. As far as I am concerned, I believe that the process is continuing and will succeed and that there is no going back even if it faces difficulties and problems. There is an overwhelming conviction of a genuine peace in the region. Since the fundamental step between the Israelis and Palestinians was made, other issues have become marginal and should be settled.

[Tuwayni] Let us speak about Lebanon for a while. Lebanon blames the Gulf states for reneging on helping Lebanon to set up an international aid fund, and before that on fulfilling their aid pledges.

[Al Khalifah] Lebanon deserves support and backing, but the pace of events has quickened and changed the facts. However, I am certain that the Lebanese people will restore to their country its integrity and strength. They are able to do so even when we look at their great achievements in the short time since the end of their conflict. I am optimistic and Lebanon is well. I agree that the Lebanese people should be helped, but I believe that they are able to stand up on their own.

Bahrain is concerned about Lebanon, just as Lebanon is concerned about Bahrain. In Lebanon you have an experiment rich with events and difficulties. We must benefit from Lebanon's experience to renounce violence, division, and terrorism.

Yemen

Yemen: Agreement With Eritrea To Resolve Dispute 'Welcomed'

JN0305073896 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Yemeni Republic welcomed the agreement on principles reached between our country and Eritrea regarding a peaceful settlement to the dispute over the Yemeni al-Hanish al-Kabir island. This agreement — according to which the two countries agree to arbitration to resolve the dispute peacefully — was announced on 1 May following the relentless efforts made by friendly France.

A responsible source at the Foreign Ministry told the YEMENI NEWS AGENCY, SABA' that our country sought to reach this agreement since the start of the crisis out of its eagerness to maintain relations between the two countries and to avoid further tension in the region, which it can do without.

Iraq: Syria's al-Asad, Saddam Reportedly Hold Border Meeting

NC0305064696 Cairo MENA in English
0613 GMT 3 May 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 3 May (MENA)—"AL-AKHBAR" quoted a report appearing in the latest issue of the Paris-based "AL-WATAN AL-ARABI" magazine on a meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn on the Syrian-Iraqi borders in the past few days. The magazine said, citing a source whose identity was undisclosed, that al-Asad-Saddam talks covered dangers besetting the Arab nation and the recent Israeli military operation against Lebanon. The source said that the Syrian president expressed concern over Israel's agreements with each of Turkey and the United States.

Iraq: 'New' Reports Note Deteriorating Conditions in Army

NC0205153596 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] New reports speak of the poor conditions prevailing in the Iraqi military establishment under the failing policies of the tyrant regime.

The reports refer specifically to the low morale and the appalling living conditions of the majority of the military. Officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers are living under very harsh conditions. The majority complain of poverty and need, particularly in view of the deterioration in the economic and trade sectors as a result of the ruling regime's irrational policies, which provided justification for the general economic embargo imposed on Iraq since 1990.

Sent by our sources inside Iraq, these reports say the appalling conditions in the army and the regime's oppressive policy toward military personnel have forced thousands to defy orders and refuse to continue in the military, because of the constant suffering. Many military units now have very high rates of defection, despite the oppressive measures the regime has adopted in view of this spreading phenomenon.

The reports also note that large numbers of military personnel continue to defect to the Kurdish areas and some neighboring states because of the poor living conditions in Iraq. The reports affirm that thousands of military personnel are awaiting an opportunity to leave their units and go where they can find security and food.

The reports add that the commanders of the military units, officers loyal to the regime, are blackmailing noncommissioned officers and rank and file soldiers, forcing them to pay bribes to obtain their regular leave of absence. This has caused a state of consternation among the military, who have become nothing but hostages in the hands of the regime's henchmen, who seek their personal interest at the expense of the oppressed soldiers.

Iraq: Government Forces Reportedly Shell Kurdish Villages

NC0205154696 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The artillery of the Aflaqite regime shelled the villages of Shaykh Lankar and (Ban Asyaw) in the city of Klar for 30 minutes last evening. Fortunately, the brutal shelling did not result in any human losses.

Iraq: Qusayy Saddam Husayn Reportedly To Issue New Daily

JN0305081696 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI
in Arabic 3 May 96 p 14

[FBIS Translated Text] Well-informed Iraqi quarters are closely monitoring the actions and behavior of Qusayy Saddam Husayn. These quarters say that Saddam Husayn's second son, who is in charge of the president's personal security, recently started showing ambitions not previously manifested and that he is competing with his brother 'Udayy for the limelight and seeks to entrench his position as Saddam Husayn's second son.

Qusayy's most recent achievement is that he got his father's approval to establish his own media institution and to publish a daily paper called SUMER. Observers are awaiting the first issue of this paper to see from its commentaries and articles how far apart politically are the two sons of Saddam Husayn.

Israel: Peres Reports 'New Ideas' To Promote Peace Process

TA0205150196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1405 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has said that he has new ideas to advance peace. When the negotiations on the Golan Heights and Judaea and Samaria are finalized, they will be decided through national referendums. Peres addressed a Herzliyya College today, and Pe'erli Shahar heard his remarks:

[Begin recording] [Shahar] The questions posed to the prime minister were forceful: Are you not caving in to the religious parties? What impact do the terrorist attacks have on the elections? When will you implement the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron? On Hebron, the prime minister responded by saying that the Cave of the Patriarchs will remain our responsibility, as will the 450 Jews living nearby.

[Peres] I believe it depends on one thing: whether we can assure security. If we can, we will implement what we promised. The problem of Hebron is that it has a stronger Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] element than in other towns. I am surprised at right wing's claims about Hebron. I understand that the right wing has adopted the Oslo accords, which stipulate that the IDF must redeploy there. Therefore, I expect the right wing to support outright the redeployment in Hebron. That is simply logical.

[Shahar] Prime Minister Peres said the decision on the Hebron redeployment might not be made at tomorrow's meeting with the defense establishment. He said that Hebron is a complex issue and that there might be several sessions on the matter. Peres said he must first hear what the army has to say, and only then will he decide.

On the peace process, Peres explained that he has new ideas but does not plan to go into them because their disclosure would immediately arouse opposition. However, he did say that the outcome of the negotiations on the Golan Heights and on Judaea and Samaria will be presented to a national referendum. On Jerusalem, he stressed that the city will remain united and under Israeli sovereignty forever. 'Arafat can dream, he said.

[Peres] I attended a news conference with 'Arafat, and one of the correspondents asked him: How can you say in Peres' presence that you want to establish a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital? 'Arafat responded: Can't I dream? I told him there is a difference between a dream and an agreement. For a dream, one person is enough. For an agreement, you need two. Thus, we cannot prevent 'Arafat from dreaming.

[Shahar] On a Palestinian state, Peres responded that Labor's platform has been amended to leave room for new ideas in the negotiations. [end recording]

Israel: Peres Discusses Peace Prospects

BR0205141596 Paris LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR in French 2-8 May 96 pp 42, 44, 45

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Jean Daniel in Jerusalem; date not given: "Shim'on Peres Explains"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Daniel] Prime Minister, we have definitely not yet understood why Israel has unleashed an operation of this scale in Lebanon. Why have your armed forces waged this operation in such a destructive way? And why have you concluded a cease-fire agreement which in no way guarantees the halt of the war and which also fails to announce an end to Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon?

[Peres] Actually, those three questions perfectly sum up the situation. If I agreed to see you it was precisely because I wanted to give you answers, even if I do not agree with your judgments on the appropriateness and aim of the operation undertaken by the Israeli Defense Forces. I am duty-bound to justify my actions to everyone who is committed to defending the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. They must not give up their struggle for peace — on the contrary.

[Daniel] Before operation Grapes of Wrath, you — a Nobel peace price laureate, heir and successor to Rabin the martyr, and enjoying support from all quarters — were respected in the Arab world, and popular throughout the world.

[Peres] Yes, but during that time my country, my people, my nation were drowning in an ocean of skepticism due to a growing feeling of overall insecurity. The peace process brought in its wake a number of attacks that were bigger than those in the intifada days. The katyushas were raining down in the north; there were attacks everywhere. You say I was popular outside the country, but inside the country my popularity was falling. I lost 16 percent of my popularity rating after the latest attacks.

[Daniel] So you were afraid of losing the elections?

[Peres] I first felt that it was time to react; the country could no longer wait. The Israeli people had to be protected and their enemies punished to serve as an example. Perhaps the world could put up with our insecurity, but we could not. When I say "we" that also means the Palestinians involved in the negotiations. As for the Lebanese officials, who are now nursing their wounds, I wonder if they seriously hoped that we could accept the situation which they were allowing to develop in the southern part of their country. But let us take a look at how my decisions developed.

It is now almost two years since we realized that two countries, Iran and Syria, were opposed to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Iran is opposed simply because it wants to destroy Israel, while Syria never thought that the peace process would succeed. These two attitudes are very different. I have never approached them in the same way.

We had irrefutable proof that the Iranians were pursuing two goals: One, to sabotage any kind of entente between the Palestinians and ourselves; and two, to eliminate — to this end — the power held previously by Rabin and now by myself. They decided to do everything. They did everything. They are doing everything to ensure that the Labor Party eats dust at the next elections. They drew up highly organized plans to create a state of insecurity in Israel. They have a number of rather direct allies: Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the Islamic Jihad, and Hizballah. These three movements are also the enemies of the Palestinians who chose 'Arafat. But where Israel is concerned, the hostility has become religious. The Iranians consider the Israelis a nation of Salman Rushdies. The means via which they execute this fatwa is the Party of God, in other words Hizballah. This party has existed since 1982, and it has constantly grown in terms of its highly mobile structure and in terms of arms. It is composed of Lebanese shi'ites totally devoted to Iran.

As for Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, cooperation with Yasir 'Arafat has proven crucial: We had a partner to fight the common enemy, and the Palestinian leader proved to be a man of great courage, capable of tackling the most delicate situations.

[Daniel] He recently won great success by getting a charter passed that does not include the destruction of Israel.

[Peres] That is a very important victory which I in no way underestimate. We were expecting it. You can rest assured that we will not be outdone with regard to Hebron, the release of prisoners, and, of course, many other things which are in line with the agreements and shared interests.

[Daniel] Are you going to remove the seal on the territories, something which is causing terrible problems for the people of Gaza?

[Peres] Not before the elections. I am sure that 'Arafat will understand. The outcome of the election depends on security.

But let us return to Hizballah. I told you that the militias which comprise it are Lebanese. They are financed in full by the Iranians, who created them, inspired them, and molded them. The religious leader is in Iran. The military equipment (katyushas, antitank missiles) comes from the Syrians. The Syrians let the Iranians do what they like.

I would like to dwell on this for a moment. Whenever I talk about Iran, especially to Europeans, I am met with skepticism. Indeed, it may well be that the Iranians have a temporary economic interest in fooling people, in playing the moderates, and seducing the West. At the very least one can see that the outcome of the last election was a victory by the most extreme and radical elements. The winners are precisely those who most want to ensure that the Israeli-Palestinian peace process fails. Pending further information, this peace process is dear to all Europeans, especially France. One must know what one wants and with whom one is allying oneself.

That leaves Hizballah. There is no one like 'Arafat in Lebanon to put it down, or even just to contain it. We have no partner. We have not found any partners among the Syrians or the government. Why? Because, when there is a division of authority, there is a division of territory. In other words, there was not a single territory that could be called Lebanese.

[Daniel] I have learned that this is pretty much what you told Jacques Chirac?

[Peres] Of course! President Chirac called me to remind me of France's historical responsibilities in Lebanon. I am too attentive to what is going on in France not to be aware of this obvious fact. I told him: I do not deny the existence of your responsibilities, I deny that of Lebanon. Could we find out who is in charge there? When the Lebanese prime minister says that Hizballah is continuing to resist the Israeli occupation, does he not mean that this mission is not being carried out at all by the Lebanese Army, which really should be playing this role? It is true that, if it were the Lebanese Army at the border, there would no longer be an occupation. Lebanon does not want Israel to disappear, but Hizballah does.

[Daniel] Hizballah has reportedly changed its tack. It has become a Lebanese national organization that will be content to chase out the occupier.

[Peres] We can talk about that again when its Iranian masters say that they accept Israel's existence. However, getting back to Lebanon, what we have sought out and what we may now find, is a responsible authority. If it is an enemy, so be it, but it could stop being one, and even become a contact person or partner. On several occasions I have solemnly declared that I would withdraw Israeli troops from the security zone as soon as the Lebanese Army gains control over Hizballah's activities. The Lebanese may be bruised and shaken, but they know full well that we have only asked to have good neighborly relations with them.

[Daniel] Your relationship with Lebanon has long been characterized by conflict!

[Peres] Whose fault is that? All of our borders are secure, except the border with Lebanon. Since 1973, peace and security have prevailed on the Golan Heights. The Lebanese have been used as hostages by the Arab world, and today they are manipulated by Iran. The Arabs have always distrusted the Lebanese. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad wrote to Fidel Castro that the existence of a majority Christian state within the Arab world could only weaken Arab progressivism and revolution. Israel has an interest in having a Christian state and a Jewish state.

[Daniel] It is time to talk about the Syrians.

[Peres] The Syrians accept the existence of the state of Israel and we can get along with them. But the Syrian head of state has a demand and a method. He never thought that Israel could make peace with the Palestinians and Jordanians without his consent. He demanded to be part of any settlement with these countries. Once the agreements were signed with 'Arafat and King Husayn, the negotiations with him — which had been very encouraging — became difficult. He no longer reined in Hizballah, something which he had previously managed to do. So much for the demand. As for the method, Hafiz al-Asad is conducting himself as if he wanted to be in conflict with us until the very last minute before the conclusion of an agreement.

According to the Americans, the Syrians do not want me to lose the election. The Likud leaders chose Paris to state that, as soon as they arrive in government, they will increase the number of settlements in all the territories conquered in 1967, especially the Golan Heights. We must not be fooled. I am not defending a government post. What is at stake in the next election is the future of Israel, of peace, and of our young people. Our country will be showing a new face to the world.

[Daniel] A face whose features have become blurred since the massacres in Qana.

[Peres] This face can be reassembled if everyone wants. So let us talk about Operation Grapes of Wrath. This operation was designed, desired, and planned as a punitive, surgical, civilian-sparing operation primarily aimed at putting pressure on the people of Lebanon so that they could get the Syrians to put an end to Hizballah's activities, to get them to split with the Iranians, to get them out of their ambiguity and hesitance. This operation went wrong in Qana on 18 May. That is true. I lament this. Obviously no order was ever given to attack civilians. I protest most indignantly against that accusation. Units were attacked and they responded. It was cloudy. There was no airborne reconnaissance. The news about the presence of civilians was given at the same time as the shooting stepped up. No war is 100-percent controllable. The main thing is not to provoke war. Nevertheless — I repeat — I lament the hundred or so deaths.

[Daniel] Please allow me to say that I find your regret rather lukewarm. You could not find the words to share with the Lebanese families, to grieve for their dead, like you managed to find for the Palestinians at UNESCO, in Paris, and in Washington.

[Peres] The first thing I had to do was stop people from looking for the person responsible. There is only one person responsible: me. If, through you, I can correct your impression, then I will do so wholeheartedly. No Israeli distinguishes between a little Lebanese girl and a little Israeli girl. But it is true, I will not allow people to forget Hizballah's original responsibility.

[Daniel] Something which the Americans never forget to do.

[Peres] The Americans have been present everywhere, and in every way. They have invested billions of dollars in all the countries in the region — including Israel — on behalf of peace.

[Daniel] They also remember that Hizballah trained the terrorist who sent the truck stuffed with explosives into the marines base in Beirut on 25 October 1982, killing 241 young Americans. Iran's former interior minister proudly talked of this feat to our British colleague Robert Fisk of THE INDEPENDENT in 1991. This is what fueled the news that the Americans and Israel had long ago undertaken to put an end to Hizballah.

[Peres] Operation Grapes of Wrath is a solely Israeli operation aimed at protecting the security of the Israelis in Galilee and guaranteeing the development of the peace process. In the past, one might have considered anything, but that was never followed up.

[Daniel] Let us take a look at the balance sheet. You have turned all of Lebanon against you and all of the Syrian-Lebanese entity against you. The press in the Arab world has unleashed itself against you and the Israelis I meet are appalled and unhappy, people who prefer you to all the others, but who feel that Israel cannot afford mistakes that look like crimes and that your Armed Forces staff has definitely not learned the lesson of the Lebanese quagmire. Why not evacuate the security zone?

[Peres] And send in Blue Helmets which will then have to be replaced by a rapid intervention force, like in Bosnia. Of course not. Listen, let us not get caught up in wailing. The agreements with the Palestinians must be applied. The elections must be won. And negotiations with the Syrians must be resumed. After all, this is the first time they have acknowledged, by their very presence in the group of countries guaranteeing the peace, that Hizballah has a responsibility in this war. If Lebanon, which is also part of this group, can make its voice heard in this sense, then that is one more trump card.

Having said that, I harbor no illusions. The more we head toward peace, the more Iran will seek to mobilize belligerent initiatives around the world. But what makes me optimistic is the intensity and determination of the U.S. commitments. People say that we are back to square one and that we have come back to the 1993 agreements. That is not right. The Americans never made a commitment in 1993 like the one they are making today. I am traveling to the United States this evening to finalize special agreements, before going to Paris, where I will meet with President Jacques Chirac.

Israel: Baraq—Syria Interested in Ending Break in Negotiations

TA0205153496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq says peace talks between Israel and Syria will not resume before the elections but, speaking to a conference of accountants, Baraq said the Syrians are interested to end the current break in the negotiations because of recent terrorist attacks.

On an army redeployment in Hebron, Baraq said a decision to postpone the move until after the elections would be based only on security considerations.

Israel: Savir—Syria Recognizes Need for Stable Lebanon for Peace

TA0205122396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir has said that the points of understanding reached with Syrian participation on the establishment of a cease-fire in Lebanon are proof that Syria believes in the importance of stability in Lebanon for the sake of achieving the primary solution. He added that peace will not be achieved without Syria. Therefore, Israel is interested in resuming the negotiations with it.

Responding to a question on the need to enhance Israeli military power in the era of peace, Savir said: "We are boosting our military power with the aim of defending ourselves against ballistic missiles. The development of a mechanism to confront these missiles is aimed against the enemies of peace."

Savir made these remarks in an interview with Sha'ul Menashe, our Middle East affairs editor.

Israel: Beilin—Declaration of Principles on 'Final Status' Within Year

TA0305063996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister Yosi Beilin says that a declaration of principles on the final status of the territories could be achieved within a year of intensive negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Speaking in Tunis, Beilin said he believed that special treatment would be granted to all Jewish holy sites. He said that Israel would do everything it could to retain control over the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron.

Israel: Beilin Praises France's Middle East Arbitration

BR0205114396 Paris LE FIGARO in French 2 May 96 p 3

[Interview with Yosi Beilin, Israeli minister in charge of the peace process, by Philippe Gelie in Jerusalem; date not given: "Yosi Beilin: France Has 'a Role To Play' in Lebanon"—first paragraph is LE FIGARO introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yosi Beilin, the 47-year-old minister without portfolio in Shim'on Peres' government, is in charge of the peace process. He gained a PhD in political science at Tel Aviv University, served as economy minister in Yitzhaq Rabin's government, and started off the secret negotiations with the PLO which led to the Oslo agreements.

[Gelie] What did Israel gain by its offensive in southern Lebanon?

[Beilin] We defended our towns in Galilee, that is all. We did not mount operation Grapes of Wrath to secure a better agreement than was achieved in July 1993. Obtaining a cease-fire was our real objective, everything else is additional to that. The innovation that will have to be evaluated in the future is the "supervision committee," which will force the opposing sides to talk to each other and could prevent misunderstandings which were partially to blame for what has happened.

[Gelie] Shim'on Peres mentioned separate negotiations with Lebanon. So has the basic situation changed?

[Beilin] We have been trying to engage in a dialogue with Beirut since 1991. The time came when we understood this was a waste of time and that it was enough to talk with the Syrians. We would prefer however a strong, independent Lebanon. We know that the Lebanese would like to make peace with Israel. It is very important for their economy. Historically, our relations have been very close. If they were free from Syrian domination they would be the first people to make peace with us. I fear that they will be the last. But if they demonstrate their desire to negotiate separately, we will go along with this.

[Gelie] Will you help to rebuild Lebanon?

[Beilin] We have simply expressed our desire to take part in the international effort.

[Gelie] Do you envision resuming the negotiations with Syria before the elections on 29 May?

[Beilin] I am not ruling out holding meetings and dialogue. But we all know that nothing concrete will emerge before the elections. I believe it is more realistic to wait.

[Gelie] For some time now Israel has been stepping up its threats against Iran. Are reprisals plausible in the event of fresh attacks by Islamists?

[Beilin] It is true that Iran is highly problematic for us. But I cannot imagine Israel declaring war on Iran. It seems to me that it is up to the international community to make efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

'Arafat's Efforts

[Gelie] Is it true that Tehran has been issued a warning via France?

[Beilin] Everyone must be satisfied with the power they have and not go beyond that. It does not seem realistic to me for Israel to engage in a war with Iran or issue threats via third countries acting as intermediaries. Of course, we cannot tolerate the activities of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or Hizballah, and we shall do everything we can to stop them. We also know that they are supported by Iran, but that does not mean to say we are going to launch operations against this country.

[Gelie] What is your assessment of France's intervention?

[Beilin] Very positive. France has unique relations with Lebanon. It has contributed to resolving the crisis.

[Gelie] Did France not above all irritate people in Israel?

[Beilin] Not everyone. France will have a role to play in the future relations between us and the Lebanese.

[Gelie] The redeployment in Hebron has been announced for the next few days. When and how will it take place?

[Beilin] We are above all committed under the terms of the treaty to place most of Hebron under Palestinian control and we shall keep this promise. Security is the only reason for the delay. Once this problem has been solved we shall redeploy. I do not wish to go into the details: Before or after the elections, in one fell swoop or in stages, that decision has not yet been made. But that changes nothing, the important thing is to meet these commitments. The question is not linked to the elections.

[Gelie] Do you believe that Yasir 'Arafat has played his part in the commitments made?

[Beilin] He has made remarkable efforts, often in the face of violent opposition. He still has to wipe out terrorism and arrest some Hamas leaders, but on the whole he has played his part and Israel will play its own role.

[Gelie] What will be the subject of the "final" negotiations with the Palestinian Authority that will start on Sunday [5 May]?

[Beilin] First procedural matters. In less than a month it would be illusory to touch on the substance of the dossiers in question. We want to say that we are ready to engage in an honest dialogue on both sides.

[Gelie] What will be the positions adopted by Israel as it embarks on this crucial task?

[Beilin] All you have to do to find out our main policy guidelines is read the Labor Party platform. That is the only official source of information. In it we say for the first time that most settlements will remain under Israeli sovereignty. We stress that the problem of Palestinian refugees will have to be solved outside Israel. We are no longer making any negative mention of the creation of a Palestinian state. And of course we reaffirm that Jerusalem will never be divided, that it will remain under Israeli sovereignty as the capital of the Jewish state.

[Gelie] How much of all this is negotiable?

[Beilin] Negotiation does not mean an exchange of slogans. We have always started out from a realistic basis and the final result has never been very far away. There is room for maneuver over questions like access to the holy sites and their control, the administrative organization of Jerusalem, the choice of a Palestinian state or a confederation with Jordan, and so forth. Meanwhile the Right is listing all the reasons for not respecting the agreements that have already been signed.

[Gelie] Do you fear that fresh attacks will ruin Shim'on Peres' chances in the election?

[Beilin] I do not believe there is a direct link between the terrorist attacks and the elections. People are aware of the situation. They know who is carrying out these attacks and why. In spite of everything, the opinion polls are remaining favorable to us. With God's help there are reasons to be optimistic.

Israel: Hebron Settlers Prevent Troops From Erecting Security Gates

TA0305063896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Dozens of settlers last night prevented soldiers in Hebron from erecting two security gates beside Bet Hadassah in readiness for the army's redeployment. The settlers refused to live in what they term a ghetto surrounded by barriers. They say that the army had undertaken to consult with them on all construction work surrounding Hebron's Jewish Quarter. There was no confrontation in the incident. The iron gates remained on the army truck and the settlers kept up a vigil at the spot to prevent them from being erected.

Israel: Or—Hebron Redeployment May Take Place After Elections

TA0305071896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or says that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron may be put off until after the elections due to security considerations.

Or told Qol Yisra'el that in Hebron, in addition to Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], there are radical Jewish elements, and the security forces are concerned about the possibility of attacks against Arabs and Jews on election day.

Or asserted that the redeployment would be postponed if by doing so lives could be saved.

Israel: Peres Discusses Hebron Redeployment With Security Officials

TA0305084196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli sources expressed the belief that the redeployment in Hebron would only be completed after the elections. The reason given for this is the fact that negotiations are currently being held with the Palestinian Authority [PA] security forces concerning redeployment dates and procedures.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that at the conclusion of this morning's meeting with defense officials, the prime minister's bureau published a communique stating that Israel was committed to implementing the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron. Israel would remain responsible for the area in Hebron where the Jews live, as well as for the Cave of the Patriarchs' compound and its access roads. The IDF would remain deployed in these areas. Prime Minister Shim'on Peres stated that there was no intention to evacuate the Jewish settlement in Hebron.

Our correspondent adds that defense sources believe that from a military standpoint, it is preferable to pull out of the city all at once. The participants at the meeting also discussed the possibility of violent attempts by Jews to disrupt the redeployment, including attacks on Arabs or on the Israeli security forces.

Our correspondent Gil Litman adds that the leaders of the Jewish settlement in the city are currently meeting in the Avraham Avinu neighborhood in the center of Hebron. They are now planning their future moves in preparation for the IDF redeployment. Uri Ari'el, the secretary of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip is also participating in the meeting.

Israel: Left-Wing Said 'Furious' Over Delay in Hebron Pullout

TA0305103496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The left wing is furious over the intention not to carry out the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron until after the Knesset elections. HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] Knesset Member [MK] Tamar Gozansky said that this was yet another blatant violation of the Oslo agreement and demanded the immediate evacuation of the Jewish settlement in Hebron.

The Peace Now movement demanded that the prime minister continue with the immediate implementation of the Oslo agreements. Peace Now urged the prime minister not to capitulate to the religious parties and the extreme right wing.

Minister Yosi Sarid expressed regret that Israel was not fulfilling its part in the agreement with the Palestinians. Sarid told Qol Yisra'el that if it were not for the political threats and pressure, the IDF would have completed its redeployment long ago.

National Religious Party MK Hanan Porat warned against the beginning of a phased evacuation of Hebron before the elections. Porat said that a partial evacuation would lead to chaos and was a sure recipe for trouble.

Israel: EU Reportedly Threatening Iran With Economic Boycott

TA0205182296 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 2 May 96

[Political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Europe has been pressuring Iran in the last few days in an attempt to prevent terrorist attacks against Israelis and Jews in Israel and other places in the world. French President Jacques Chirac reported to Prime Minister Shim'on Peres yesterday that the EU is threatening Iran for the first time with an economic boycott if there are such terrorist attacks. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports:

[Begin Rosen recording] Security elements say that Tehran is preparing a mass attack which the Iranians hope will decide the Israeli elections. It now transpires that in recent days, indifferent Europe has joined an unprecedented endeavor to prevent Iran from implementing its scheme.

Yesterday in Paris, Chirac told Peres that the EU is threatening Iran for the first time to sever its wide-ranging economic ties if it transpires that Tehran is preparing terrorist attacks in Israel and other places around the world. Europe, unlike the United States, has what it calls a critical dialogue with Iran. In other words, Europe has extensive trade ties with Tehran after having been assured that Iran is not making military use of them and is preventing Iran's isolation through a bear hug without which, the Europeans claim, Iran would decline into unrestrained extremism. The United States and Israel do not believe in that carrot-and-stick policy, but Chirac's report yesterday has aroused optimism in Jerusalem. A senior Israeli source said: Operation Grapes of Wrath has apparently given birth to an unplanned goal: initial practical steps to curtail Iran as the No. 1 terrorist state in the world. [end recording]

Israel: 'Secret' Appeal to U.S. To Pressure Russia on Jewish Agency

TA0205115796 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Foreign Ministry has sent a secret message to the U.S. ambassador in Moscow asking him to try to soften the Russian Government's attitude toward the Jewish Agency operating on its territory. This was learned today from political sources. Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg left for the United States today to confer with leaders of Jewish organizations in a bid to pressure the U.S. Administration to intercede in the affair. Our correspondent Tom Shin'an:

[Shin'an] What the Jewish Agency had tried to depict as a mere bureaucratic affair erupted two days ago. Russian agents halted a seminar of Jewish Agency aliya emissaries in a town in the northern Caucasus on the grounds that the Jewish Agency no longer has permission to operate in Russia. This move came on the heels of a variety of other measures adopted by the Russian Government against the Jewish Agency and a surging wave of anti-Semitism.

Today, the Foreign Ministry stepped into the picture of what has almost evolved into a diplomatic crisis. Political sources say that the Foreign Ministry is currently trying to make the Americans pressure the Russian Government and that a message to this effect has been sent to the U.S. ambassador in Moscow.

Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg is taking part in the entreaties to the Americans. This morning, he left on a brief trip to the United States during which he will confer with leaders of the Jewish organizations; perhaps, they will also be able to help out.

Another purpose of his trip is to sign an agreement with the directors of Swiss banks to establish a joint committee to track down bank accounts held by Jews in Switzerland during World War II.

Israel: Peres Blamed for Deterioration in Russian Relations

TA0205151096 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 May 96 p B2

[Article by Yosi Melman: "They Always Have Time for Senators but Never for Russians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Toward the end of Operation Grapes of Wrath, the prime minister was given the opportunity to somewhat mend the dismal relations which have emerged in recent months between Israel and Russia. The restriction imposed on the Jewish

Agency's operations in Russia is clear evidence of this bleak climate. Shim'on Peres failed to seize this opportunity, however, and instead put his foot in his mouth, causing yet a further deterioration in relations.

He did so in his meeting almost 10 days ago with Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov. The Russian visitor arrived in Jerusalem after flying in from Damascus, where he had conferred with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. Primakov came to the Middle East in the midst of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's shuttle mission. U.S. diplomats were apprehensive, to say the least, about the Russian attempt to join the negotiations. In Israel, too, many officials thought that the Russians were "pushing their way in" and that they might only get in the way, but nobody said it openly.

The man who said loud and clear what Israeli foreign policymakers had kept in their hearts was the prime minister. In contravention of diplomatic etiquette, Peres did not hesitate to say as much to Primakov's face. Attending the meeting on the Israeli side were Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq, Peres' aide-de-camp Dani Yatom, Israel's Ambassador in Moscow 'Aliza Shenhar, and a few officials from the Foreign Ministry and the Prime Minister's Office.

Peres stressed to Primakov that Israel trusts only the U.S. mediation efforts, not Russian diplomacy. Several participants in the meeting say that Peres was in a particularly "aggressive" mood. "Not only were his words harsh but his tone was brusque and jarring," one participant n[illegible]. Later, the prime minister even reiterated his position in interviews to the media.

It seems that Peres was eager to please the Americans and demonstrate his unqualified loyalty. No less astonishing is the fact that not even one of the Israelis asked Primakov and his aides about their meetings with al-Asad and Velayati. After all, in those critical hours of the operation, the Israeli Government and its intelligence community in particular were carefully studying every Syrian and Iranian pronouncement.

The Russians maintain direct relations with Hizballah and have contacts with the Palestinian rejectionist organizations of George Habash and Nayif Hawatimah. On this issue, too, the Israelis failed to seize the opportunity to hear an update about the prevailing mood in Hizballah. Instead, they recited Israel's official position to the Russians. Perhaps because of his previous job as head of his country's intelligence service, Primakov did not volunteer any information either.

Russia was further humiliated when Israel refused to include it in the committee monitoring the implementation of the cease-fire agreement, which is made up of representatives of Israel, Syria, Lebanon, the United States, and France. The latter's inclusion was meant to "toss a bone" to French diplomacy, which had also been trying to join the game. The Russians concealed their humiliation and did not demonstrate it in public, not even in the Russian media, where Primakov's trip was given minimal coverage. The Russian media rarely cover foreign affairs and concentrate on domestic issues, particularly the war in Chechnya and the campaign for the presidential elections, scheduled to be held in June.

In any event, the Middle East is not a top priority for Russian foreign policymakers. They are more preoccupied with their relations with the United States and the possible expansion of NATO. Primakov and his aides vented their outrage and humiliation in private conversations, whose content the Israeli Embassy in Moscow learned of and then conveyed to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. In those conversations, the Russians expressed their deep disappointment with the way Israel has been treating them. We find Israel's policy toward us hard to understand, Russian officials said. Russia and the United States are the cosponsors of the peace process in the Middle East. We have relations with Iran, but you do not take advantage of them, the Russians said.

Israel's approach does not only denote a lack of diplomatic savoir faire, however. A senior Israeli government official believes it also lacks political sophistication. The same official believes that even if Israel wanted to drive Russia out of the region, it could still have attained this goal without offending Moscow and might even have promoted its own vital interests.

The official believes that Israel could have agreed to include Russia in the monitoring committee and, in return, pose demands regarding issues of importance to it, such as Jewish emigration and the supply of Russian weapons to Iran. Israel could have demanded that Russia license the activities of the Jewish Agency. After all, both Jewish Agency officials and cabinet ministers realize that the affair has already had a detrimental impact on Jewish emigration. It is also clear to Foreign Ministry officials that the restriction on the Jewish Agency's activities could not have been issued without the approval of senior political levels in Moscow, probably Primakov himself.

Another area in which Israel could have benefited from such a "give-and-take" pertains to Moscow-Tehran relations. Israeli diplomats seize almost every possible occasion to voice their anxiety about arms deals and the sale of a Russian nuclear reactor to Iran. The issue was also brought up during Primakov's visit. Amb. Shenhar, who drove with him from Ben-Gurion Airport to the meeting with Peres, asked him about the issue point blank. It was obvious to her, however, that Russia has a clear interest in developing relations with Iran. Therefore, it is quite unlikely that an Israeli entreaty would have led to the cancellation of the deals. Yet an Israeli approach more considerate of Russian interests in the Middle East and a subtler diplomacy could have helped boost Russia's awareness of Israel's apprehension on the issue.

After his brief trips to Jerusalem and Damascus, Primakov joined President Yeltsin on his trip to China. His deputy, Viktor Posuvalyuk, stayed in the region and continued to shuttle between Damascus and Jerusalem, where he met with Minister Yosi Beilin. Although the latter is considered close to Peres, the Russians saw this meeting as yet another sign of contempt. Neither the prime minister nor the foreign minister met with Posuvalyuk to hear his impressions from the Syrian capital, "although they always have time for every U.S. congressman or senator," a Russian official griped.

Posuvalyuk told Beilin: Despite your attitude toward us and the fact that you perceive us as an enemy, "we will continue to operate in the Middle East. Russia had and will continue to have interests in the region." "We continue to live in a multisuperpower world," Primakov said upon returning from his trip to China, echoing Yeltsin's words that Russia, China, and the United States are the three world superpowers.

"I am definitely aware of Russia's importance. Israel is very interested in maintaining good relations with it. It is clear to me that the political process in the region would not have gotten off the ground had it not been for Mikhail Gorbachev's decision in the 1980's. Also, we must not forget that although it is now a dormant superpower, Russia may very well wake up one day and play an important role in international politics," emphasizes Beilin.

Israel: More on Russian Moves To Curtail Jewish Agency Activities

TA0205191696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 May 96 pp A1, A12

[Report by Rali Sa'ar]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday afternoon, the Russian authorities halted a seminar of Jewish Agency aliyah emissaries in the town of Piatrgorsk in the northern Caucasus. Representatives of the Russian immigration service and the police turned up at the Jewish Agency offices in the town and ordered the agency envoy to show them the agency's letter of authorization permitting it to operate in Russia. Since Russia withdrew the agency's license ("accreditation") in early April, such a document could not be produced.

The Russian Government representatives asked the envoy to accompany them to the hall where the seminar was being conducted and there, in the presence of the participants, the decision of the Russian deputy justice minister to prohibit the agency's activities was read out. The government representatives then declared that the seminar was terminated.

The Jewish Agency said that "the immediate significance of the act in terms of Jewish Agency activities in Piatrgorsk is the cessation of aliyah from a central region that has wide-ranging aliyah activities."

A senior government source told HA'ARETZ yesterday that "Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg's insistence on handling the crisis himself will harm the Jews in Russia and even the agency itself. It is a political problem which can be resolved only by the senior Israeli Government political echelon: the prime minister and the foreign minister.

"The Russians decided to curtail Israel's activities on their soil for political reasons. They are adopting moves which show a determined and planned action; therefore, Burg must cooperate with the Foreign Ministry, as it was recently suggested to him, and not conduct his own independent foreign policy."

Burg informed Foreign Ministry officials in a discussion held two weeks ago that he prefers to deal with the renewal of the Jewish Agency's license by himself and wants to act through bureaucratic channels.

The senior government source also said: "Since the Russian Government prohibited the Jewish Agency from operating and withdrew its license, the agency should not have convened a heavily attended seminar because, by doing so, it signaled to the government: We do not give a damn about your decisions."

HA'ARETZ notes that Ella Levi, head of the Jewish Agency's CIS department, recently returned from Russia where she went especially to present a request to renew the agency's license.

Yesterday, Burg expressed concern "about what has recently been happening in Russia." He announced that he will leave for the United States over the weekend for special consultations on the matter with leaders of Jewish organizations. He intends to appeal to the heads of the organizations — wealthy Jewish people with trade ties with Russia — to intervene with the Russian authorities in behalf of the Jewish Agency.

The Jewish Agency stressed that "in talks Burg held recently with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, they worked out a strategy to separate the agency's relations with the Russian Government from Israeli-Russian relations."

Israel: U.S. Urges Sensitive Handling of Jewish Agency Crisis

TA0305100696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 May 96 p A12

[Report by 'Aqiva Eldar and Rally Sa'ar]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Administration has asked Israel and American Jewish organizations not to solicit the help from Congress members to pressure the Russian Government following the suspension of the activities of the Jewish Agency in Russia. Sources in Washington dealing with the crisis said yesterday that in the wake of this appeal, congressmen have softened the wording of letters issued on this affair.

President Clinton, who is interested in Boris Yeltsin's reelection, is afraid that this move will be interpreted as Yeltsin's surrender to American and Israeli pressure and will play into the hands of his rivals from the nationalist right wing.

Senior U.S. Administration officials told Jewish activists and Israeli diplomats that the administration wants to avoid any confrontations with Yeltsin. They added, however, that they are convinced the problem will be resolved soon. The officials believe Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov is using the crisis to court the right wing, and perhaps even to increase his foothold in the Middle East peace process.

At the same time the State Department relayed a message to the most senior Russian Government echelons stating that the United States is following the affair with great anxiety and is demanding explanations regarding the ban imposed on the Jewish Agency's activities. The message was relayed by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Thomas Pickering via quiet diplomatic channels.

Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg was yesterday slated to meet the heads of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and leaders of organizations acting on behalf of Soviet Jewry. Senior members of the conference said before the meeting that they intend to accept the U.S. Administration position and reject any attempt to exacerbate the struggle against the Yeltsin government. They expressed their conviction that it is possible to overcome the crisis amicably.

Israel: Poll Indicates Peres Preserving Lead Over Netanyahu

TA0305104396 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 May 96 p 3

[Dahaf Institute poll directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah; all answers given in percents; results of last poll given in parenthesis]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: If the elections for the premiership between Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu were held today, who would you vote for?

Answer: Shim'on Peres — 49 (49); Binyamin Netanyahu — 44 (44); undecided/no answer — 7 (7).

Question: If the elections for the Knesset were held today, what party would you vote for (number of seats in present Knesset given in brackets)?

Answer: Labor — 43 (42+) [44]; Likud, Tzomet, Gesher — 40 (42) [40]; Meretz — 7+ (6+) [12]; Moledet — 3 (3) [3]; National Religious Party — 5+ (6) [6]; United Torah Jewry — 4 (4) [4]; SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] — 5 (4+) [6]; HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] — 3+ [3]; Third Way — 2 (1+); Yisra'el Ba'aliya — 4 (3); Arab Democratic Party and Islamic Movement — 2+ [2].

The poll, which was conducted on 1 and 2 May, included 1,007 interviewees constituting a representative sample of the adult Israeli population. Maximal margin of error is 4 percent. Lists that did not pass the minimum quota needed for being elected were not included in this forecast.

Israel: Poll Shows Peres Lead on Netanyahu Growing

TA0305112896 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 May 96 p 3

[Geocartographia Institute poll directed by Professor Avi Degani and Dr. Rina Degani; all answers given in percents; results of last poll given in parentheses]

[FBIS Translated Text] Question: If the elections for the premiership between Shim'on Peres and Binyamin Netanyahu were held today, who would you vote for?

Answer: Shim'on Peres — 50 (48); Binyamin Netanyahu — 44 (43); undecided/no answer — 6 (9).

Question: If the elections for the Knesset were held today, what party would you vote for (number of seats in present Knesset given in brackets)?

Answer: Labor — 43+ (45) [44]; Likud, Tzomet, Gesher — 39- (41) [40]; Meretz — 7 (6) [12]; Moledet — 2 (2) [3]; National Religious Party — 7 (6) [6]; United Torah

Jewry — 4 (5) [4]; SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] — 4 (3) [6]; HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] — 4 [3]; Third Way — 2 (2); Yisra'el Ba'aliya — 6 (4+); Arab Democratic Party and Islamic Movement — 2 [2].

The poll, which was conducted on 1 and 2 May, included 1,002 interviewees constituting a representative sample of the adult Israeli population. Maximum margin of error is 4 percent. Lists that did not pass the minimum quota needed for being elected were not included in this forecast.

Israel: U.S. 'Not Crazy About' Peres Despite 'Show' During Visit

TA0205141396 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (HAYOM supplement) in Hebrew 2 May 96 p 3

[Commentary by Avino'am Bar-Yosef: "Critical Support"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Now that the big show is over, let us look at what the people of Israel really got out of Shim'on Peres' visit to the United States and what remains in Peres' pocket with the start of the election campaign. Have the pictures of Bill and Shim'on, which both need for their campaigns, made more difference to those wavering between the Likud and Labor than the lies uncovered by Professor Yehoshu'a Porat about the amendment of the Palestinian Charter?

Take the Phalanx system as an example. It is an old cannon which fires thousands of shells per minute, is radar-guided, and is meant to intercept slow surface-to-surface missiles. According to military experts, the effectiveness of the antikatyusha system is like using a fly repellent to reassure the residents of the northern border.

The idea of offering Israel the system was raised in the Pentagon last week not as an interim solution but as an attempt to remove the Nautilus laser system, whose development could cost the American taxpayer some $70 million in the first stage, from the gift basket given to Peres.

When the visit was being prepared, Israel requested that the project, surprisingly halted after a successful test in New Mexico, be resumed. Military attaches at the Israeli Embassy in Washington mustered the support of the U.S. Army, which acknowledges Nautilus' advantages not only against katyushas but also against enemy aircraft and helicopters.

When Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri arrived in Washington last Friday [26 April] for preparatory talks, he was surprised to find that the anti-katyusha project no longer exists. This came after the Pentagon had insisted that the U.S. Army chiefs fund the project from their own budgets and inform it from which project the money would come.

The military attache's office did not make it easy on the generals in the room, and in the end the Nautilus was put back in Peres' basket. The Pentagon, which has an interest in the project in order to promote U.S. arms sales, among other reasons, and prevent unemployment in the military industries during an election year, proposed it to provide an interim solution against Hizballah rockets and to reassure the residents along Israel's northern border. This followed the U.S. Department of Defense's secret assessment that the agreement Warren Christopher reached with Israel, Syria, Lebanon, France, and Russia will not hold even until the upcoming Israeli elections.

Why the example of the Phalanx? The answer lies in the gimmick aspect of the prime minister's visit to Washington one month before the Israeli elections. To be honest, it should be said that despite all the intimacy between the U.S. Administration and the Peres government and all the genuine admiration Clinton has for Israel and the Jewish people, it did not bring any change in the policy the United States has pursued toward Israel since the Six Day War. Now, like then, the United States wants Israel to return to the 1967 borders, while perhaps accepting marginal border adjustments but without recognizing Israel's sovereignty over all parts of Jerusalem.

The Americans are not crazy about Shim'on Peres. They don't like his tricks. They are suspicious of his European orientation, and they particularly do not like the attempt to bring France into the Middle East through the back door. But they know that, with him, they will find it much easier to advance their policy, which is meant to win them points with the Arabs.

That does not mean that Israel didn't get anything out of the visit. The cooperation agreement on the antiballistic missile systems and on providing Israel with intelligence information from U.S. spy satellites is very important, but it is primarily the natural byproduct of the relations between the two states.

Peres, in his own way, left Clinton another unguided missile: Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Washington and the mutually accepted lie that he has amended the Palestinian Charter. This week, when the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Embassy heard my reservations about the Palestine National Council's wording, they scoffed, responding that I am a cynic at all costs. But the remarks by Prof. Porat, a Meretz member and known in the United States as a top Middle East expert, were noted. His call to vote for Netanyahu is still reverberating among the U.S. peace team.

Even before Clinton brought 'Arafat to the White House, he knew that he would not display these pictures in his campaign. Not only the Jews have reservations about 'Arafat; most Americans have not forgotten the pictures of him kissing Saddam Husayn during the Gulf war and his embrace with Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

It is no coincidence that Clinton was quick to issue a declaration in Peres' presence that the pact of friendship between the two states will continue no matter who wins the Israeli elections. According to the administration's assessment, the gap between the Likud and Labor candidates for prime minister has closed much more than the Israeli polls indicate. In the U.S. view, the Israeli elections will be decided by 1 percent either way. I can say with certainty that in another two or three months, after a new government is formed, the victor will be invited to Blair House. Clinton will need the visit even more if Netanyahu beats Peres, because the old photographs in the White House archives will have limited value in his efforts not only to win the Jewish vote but, even more, to get their financial contributions.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Briefs Cabinet on Talks in U.S.

NC0205200196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 2 May 96

[Statement by Information Minister Farid Makari after a cabinet meeting in Beirut on 2 May—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Council of Ministers today held its weekly meeting at the invitation of the prime minister. His excellency the president of the republic attended and chaired the meeting. His excellency the president opened by spoking about his visit to the United States and his speech to the UN General Assembly [UNGA], which held an extraordinary session at Lebanon's request. The president expressed satisfaction at the UNGA members' responsiveness to Lebanon's demands and their condemnation of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. His excellency expressed his belief that Lebanon's presence in the highest world forum effectively helped the world understand Lebanon's cause, revealed the falsity of Israel's allegations concerning its war against Lebanon and exposed Israel's massacres against children and innocent people.

His excellency informed the Council of Ministers of the results of his meetings with U.S. President Bill Clinton and French President Jacques Chirac. He expressed hope that the point in the written understanding concerning the formation of a consultative group to meet the needs of the reconstruction process in Lebanon, especially in the regions damaged by the Israeli aggression, will be implemented. He thanked all fraternal and friendly countries for their support for Lebanon during its ordeal.

His excellency the president saluted the unified Lebanese position as impressively shown during the days of trail. He said that unity was the best response to the Israeli designs and bolstered the Lebanese position at home and abroad.

The Council of Ministers then reviewed the post-cease-fire period and the contacts on the formation of a monitoring committee as stipulated in the understanding concluded on Friday 26 April. The prime minister stressed that efforts are being made to form this committee in cooperation with the states that are guaranteeing the said understanding.

The Council of Ministers noted the period of national mourning for the martyrs of the Qana massacre. It viewed the comprehensive national participation in the funeral of the martyrs as underlining Lebanon's unified position and the national spirit in the face of Israeli aggression. The Council stressed the need to work to maintain this national unity to enable the country in order to overcome the aftermath of the Israeli aggression on all levels. On the suggestion of his excellency the minister of post and telecommunications, the Council of Ministers agreed to issue a stamp to commemorate the Qana massacre. It was also decided to study the possibility of building a memorial in Alisar with a museum containing photographs of all the massacres perpetrated by the Israeli occupation against the Lebanese people. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Buwayz—U.S., French Ideas Close, Not Final

NC0205173196 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has stated that he listened to initial ideas from the U.S. and French ambassadors on how to consolidate the understanding that was reached through the principle of exchanged messages, and on the work plan of the committee that will supervise the cease-fire: where the committee will meet, its membership, its formation, and how it will handle complaints. He remarked that these ideas are not final. The Lebanese state wants and is prepared to set up this committee as soon as possible, Buwayz said. He refused to give a specific deadline or get into details about the formation of the committee, saying that these points are under discussion with the states involved in that committee.

Buwayz thinks these ideas will materialize within a few days. He said the U.S. and French ideas are close. The method may differ, but as long as the basic goal is there, the mechanism will be compatible with the vision, he said.

Asked about the messages to be exchanged, and whether the Lebanese message is ready, Buwayz said: Nothing is ready; we are still exchanging ideas. The length of the message is not as important as the need to deduce from it the idea of consent, he remarked.

Touching on the makeup of the advisory group, Minister Buwayz said: We are still at the beginning of the road; we are exchanging general viewpoints. We have not reached a specific paper or proposal. We need a few days to achieve the thing that is urgent, which is the committee that will monitor the implementation of the agreement; after that comes the advisory committee that will support the government's reconstruction efforts.

Buwayz described Peres's statement on contributing to the reconstruction of Lebanon as media talk. If it is serious, we will examine the proposal and the price involved.

Lebanon: SLA Commander on Retaliation for Hizballah Shelling

NC0205194996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Antoine Lahd [commander of the South Lebanese Army, SLA] has said that Israel and Hizballah have conflicting understandings of some clauses of the cease-fire agreement.

He added that the follow-up committee should meet with the parties concerned and explain again the real concepts of the understanding. Lahd said: If Hizballah bombards civilians we will retaliate even if its fighters are scattered among civilians. Lahd emphasized that there will be no Israeli withdrawal from the border strip except through negotiations and political efforts.

Lebanon: Hizballah Spokesman Says Fighting To Continue

AU0205141896 Berlin DIE TAGESZEITUNG in German 29 Apr 96 p 8

[Interview with Hizballah Spokesman Na'if Qarayyin by Michael Gaebel in Beirut; date not given: "We Are Not a Bunch of Madmen Who Are Firing Katyusha Missiles"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gaebel] Did the cease-fire come unexpectedly for Hizballah?

[Qarayyin] The Israelis were not able to inflict severe damage on the resistance. They wanted to sew discord between the resistance groups and the people, the resistance and the Lebanese Government. That plan did not work out. They cannot hit Hizballah directly, because we are guerrilla fighters. We do not have any barracks or positions that could be identified exactly. Hizballah is a people's resistance movement that cannot be hit or destroyed so easily. Since they failed to achieve their objectives, the Israelis had to seek a solution to end the operation.

[Gaebel] So was the Hizballah's strategy successful?

[Qarayyin] We have no reason to be proud of something. We cannot say that our strategy was a success. It will be a success once we have shed the occupation. There is no reason to be happy. Many civilians have lost their lives. Of course, we are happy that we did not let the enemy act as he wanted.

[Gaebel] The Israelis define their attacks as a retaliatory measure to Hizballah attacks.

[Qarayyin] We do not attack, we only react to aggression. Our civilians are attacked and we must defend them. We are the effect, not the cause. The real cause of the crisis is the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. There was no Hizballah before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

[Gaebel] What is the Hizballah's position on this cease-fire?

[Qarayyin] We wanted a cease-fire as quickly as possible. We are not a bunch of madmen who are firing Katyusha missiles, who shoot for the sake of shooting. In our resistance against the occupation of southern Lebanon, we have not used the Katyushas even once. We only started using them when the Israelis were shooting directly at our civilians. The cease-fire is a triumph for the people. After all, what else have the Katyushas done to Israel but spread fear? They cannot destroy Israel, and we know that.

[Gaebel] Does the cease-fire agreement mean the end of resistance?

[Qarayyin] No, absolutely not. As long as this occupation continues, we will fight against it. The only thing that ended — I hope — was the hostile actions against our civilians.

[Gaebel] So the fighting will only continue in the occupied area?

[Qarayyin] Yes, until we will have liberated the country.

[Gaebel] Under what conditions would Hizballah negotiate a peace settlement?

[Qarayyin] Peace requires a solid and just foundation. This so-called peace process in the Middle East does not grant all the parties their rights. What is going to happen with the 5 million Palestinian refugees?

[Gaebel] What could the foundation for fair peace look like?

[Qarayyin] We are not against the Jewish people. We are ready to live together with the Jews as brothers. We are against the Zionists and against Israeli plots. When ideals and values are based on hostilities, on expansionism, national hubris, and arrogance, then one cannot coexist in peace. We are ready for it. Yet, are they ready to give up their expansionist plans? I do not think so. If they really want peace, then why do they not allow the return of the 5 million Palestinians to Palestine? That would be a token of good will. The Zionists are contradicting themselves. While holding commemorative celebrations for the Holocaust victims, they carried out a massacre in Qana.

Lebanon: Fadlallah on U.S. Support of Israeli Aggression

LD0205223096 Tehran IRNA in English
2125 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, 2 May (IRNA) — Prominent Lebanese alim, Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said here today that the main source of problems for Muslims was the U.S. administration with its support for the terrorism of the Zionist regime.

Fadlallah, warning that Washington intends to turn Israel into the sole power in the Middle East as part of its strategy to impose a humiliating peace on regional states, regretted that rulers of Arab states had willingly put on the American yoke themselves.

As an example, he cited King Husayn of Jordan, and said the Jordanian ruler would stand beside the Zionist regime in its military aggression against Lebanon, if he did not fear the wrath of his own people.

Fadlallah said that the Islamic resistance forces have managed to defuse the Zionist regime's plots and save lives of defenceless civilians.

He added that the Islamic resistance movement was capable of making the world accept it as a movement, which defended Lebanon and the Lebanese nation through its steadfastness against Israel's aggressions.

The lie that the Hizballah were terrorists has been nailed, and today it is clear that the real terrorist is Israel, he added.

Lebanon: 'Lukewarm' Relations With Iran Over Hizballah Noted

NC0205150996 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic
29 Apr 96 pp 8-9

[FBIS Translated Text] For several reasons, Lebanese-Iranian relations are lukewarm, and Lebanese officials are annoyed at the way Tehran is dealing with the Lebanese state and its establishments.

The most prominent feature of the tepid relations was the postponement of a visit by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati to Beirut. Velayati was touring the region as part of the diplomatic contacts made in Damascus by the foreign ministers of a number of influential countries to arrange a cease-fire in Lebanon.

Differences began to escalate when Iran, unlike all other states, sent medical and humanitarian aid to Hizballah, not to the official Lebanese institutions. It is the Lebanese Higher Relief Committee that distributes relief material among the displaced and the hospitals in view of the Israeli "Grapes of Wrath" operation. This strange Iranian behavior shows lack of respect for the Lebanese state, as though the old, bizarre situation that existed back in the time of the militia still existed.

In protest, no Lebanese official wanted to receive Shaykh Khonsari, the Iranian deputy foreign minister for Middle Eastern affairs when he visited Beirut recently. The only exception was his meeting with Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri. That was a stormy meeting in which Birri criticized the intentional or unintentional — it matters not — Iranian conduct. Birri explained that by this action, Iran was offering itself as a supporter of only a certain Lebanese party, and not the official Lebanese position.

It was in this atmosphere that Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati planned to visit Beirut. When he asked for a list of appointments with Lebanese officials, he was given only one: a meeting with his counterpart Faris Buwayz. Diplomatic excuses for this were proferred, but Velayati understood that failure to treat him the way the foreign ministers of Russia, France, and Italy were treated — each of whom met with President al-Hirawi, Prime Minister al-Hariri, Speaker Birri, and Foreign Minister Buwayz — meant that the Lebanese authorities were extremely indignant toward Iran, which had made a mistake in its dealings with Lebanon and, for all practical purposes, wanted to confine its relations to relations with a particular Lebanese party.

Velayati decided to postpone his visit to Beirut week before last. However, he visited Beirut last week, after diplomatic contacts aimed at dispelling the lukewarmness, which was caused by Iran's "illogical and unacceptable position toward Lebanon."

Syria: Damascus Radio Reports Israel's Peres Statement on Golan Heights

JN0305072396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupied Palestine—Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres yesterday acknowledged that reaching a peace agreement with Syria requires the relinquishment of the occupied Golan Heights.

In statements he made at the Israeli settlement of Herzliyya, Peres said that peace with Syria cannot be achieved without — what he termed — conceding the Golan Heights.

Syria: Al-Asad, Lebanese President Agree To Meet 'Soon'

JN0205182996 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hafiz al-Asad had a telephone conversation with Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi last night. The conversation dealt with the situation in Lebanon before and after the cease-fire and the results that have been reached. His excellency the president was briefed by President al-Hirawi on the results of his talks in Washington with U.S. President Bill Clinton and in Paris with French President Jacques Chirac. The two presidents agreed to meet soon.

Syria: Radio—Israel 'Rewarded' by U.S. for 'Aggression'

JN0205174096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 2 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: The workers of the world, on their day yesterday, celebrated the gains of their struggle and their future aspirations. The only exception were the workers under the Israeli siege in the occupied Arab territories and the Lebanese workers, who returned to see the ashes of their farms, which once promised bountiful crops, and the debris of their homes, factories, and fishing boats. Despite this bloody tragedy, which exposes the Israeli state terrorism, some international quarters, traditionally biased toward Israel, were not embarrassed to issue one of their unfair terrorism lists, forcing onto this list states that simply will not relinquish their independent national decisionmaking. However, they did not include on this list the state to which the terrorism label applies better than any other state; namely, Israel.

On 30 April, the Arab nation wept with Lebanon and bade farewell to the righteous martyrs of Qana, who were some of the victims of the Israeli terrorism whose claws hooked into Lebanon on 10 April. During those sad hours, the United States was concluding a number of strategic military, economic, and financial agreements with Israel. Instead of punishing Israel for invading Lebanon and taking it to account for its aggression, the aggressor was rewarded for his aggression, the terrorist for his terrorism, and the war criminal for his war crimes. The least that can be said about this situation is that it contravenes the UN principles and laws, human ideals, and cultural values for which mankind struggled for thousands of years to establish.

In light of the agreements that were signed between Israel and the U.S. Administration on 30 April, one has to remember that Israel was authorized at the Sharm al-Shaykh summit to commit aggression on the pretext of what they called combating terrorism. Earlier, at the Casablanca conference, Shim'on Peres was marketed as the so-called man of moderation. Meanwhile, he was declaring with gross arrogance Israel's rancorous intentions toward the Arab cultural identity under the slogan of creating a Middle East community under the leadership of Israel, backed by the international monopolies known as intercontinental companies. At that conference, the U.S. Administration presented what it called a working paper on the future of security, or, the security of the future in the Middle East. The essence of that working paper was that security would be based on three pillars. These are the United States, Israel, and Turkey. Therefore, the Turkish-Israeli alliance was not in itself surprising. It should not be surprising for those who attended the Casablanca meeting. Yet, Arab citizens still hope that those gentlemen will honestly and carefully reconsider their stands rather than doing more rushing [toward Israel] and offering Israel further concessions.

Obviously the picture is dark. Rays of light are, however, penetrating this darkness, restoring the defective situation to normal. The Lebanese national unity, which was a major Israeli target, stood before the entire world as a lofty mountain and a brilliant lighthouse dispelling the darkness of the Israeli terrorism. The hundreds of thousands of citizens whose lives, homes and means of livelihood suffered immense losses, and whom Israel wanted to place on a collision course with their government, knew from the outset that they should join hands with their government and direct their wrath against the Israeli aggression and terrorism. Likewise, the terrorist Israeli intrigues against the national Lebanese resistance were foiled. Despite the massacres and war crimes, that crazy aggression could not scratch Lebanon's right to resist the occupation.

Given the springs of wrath surging from the hearts of Arab citizens throughout the Arab homeland, those who justified the Israeli aggression should carefully examine the true state of affairs and reconsider any agreement that does not restore the rights of Arab citizens, does not provide security and safety for them, and does not maintain their national and human dignity. This is because people's will rejects submission to anything that does not ensure their rights and dignity. This was manifested to the entire world by Lebanon's cohesion with the resistance groups and the Arab masses' support for Syria's rejection of any relinquishment of rights and sovereignty. The understanding that led to the cease-fire reinforced the conviction of the entire international community that the only way to achieve a firm, durable, and comprehensive peace is through a move by the international community, especially its effective powers, led by the United States, France, Russia, and the EU, to force Israel to implement the UN Security Council resolutions related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. This means the removal of the Israeli occupation with all its forms and institutions from the entire occupied Lebanese territory, the entire occupied Golan, and the occupied Arab territories so as to arrive at a just, comprehensive peace that ensures everybody's rights and dignity and that leads to regional and world stability.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Possible Moves Made To Heal Rift in Islamic Unity Party

LD0205200996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview with a correspondent of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Radio-television, Mr. Nateqi, spokesman of the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party — anti-government faction] in Bamian Province, expressed ignorance over the dispatch to Bamian of a delegation from the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami in Kabul [pro-government faction] for talks with Khalili [leader of anti-government faction].

He said that after the departure of Mr. Borujerdi, Iran's deputy minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Yunis Qanuni, acting defense minister of Afghanistan, went to Bamian at the head of a delegation which held talks with Mr. Khalili.

Referring to an application by Baz Mohammad Khan Hazara, a commander of Sayyaf and Jami'at in Dara-ye Shekari and Tala-o Barfak regions, located in the north of Afghanistan [neighboring Bamian Province], to defect to Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami, Nateqi said: Baz Mohammad Khan, who is a well-known Afghan personality in the north, came to Bamian on Monday, 10 Sowr [30 April] with 100 other commanders. After talks with the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami, all obstacles existing between the north and the [Bamian] center have been removed and traffic is now moving along these directions.

Mr. Nateqi further added that Mr. Amini Ashterli, who is a well-known personality and the chief aide of Mr. Akbari [leader of pro-government faction of Islamic Unity Party] recently expressed a wish to hold talks with commanders of the Hezb-e Eslami in Bamian.

Afghanistan: Taleban Rocket Attack on Kabul Kills 3, Injures 14

LD0205152496 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1430 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Overnight and throughout today [2 April] the mercenary Taleban fired 15 rockets into residential areas of Kabul city, killing three and injuring 14. In addition to the loss of life, these rockets also destroyed three residential houses.

India

India: Court Discharges 6 Accused in ISRO Spying Case

BK0205134496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Ernakulam chief judicial magistrate today discharged all the six accused of espionage charges in the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] spying case. The magistrate, while accepting the 110-page report submitted by CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] seeking discharge of the accused, pointed out that the investigations did not prove espionage.

Our Kochi correspondent reports that the charges against the accused under the Prevention of Corruption Act are still pending in another Ernakulam court. The CBI counsel moved an application in the court for the extension of the remand of the two accused Maldivian women, as investigation under the Prevention of Corruption Act has not been completed.

India: U.S. Said To Have 'Blind Spot' Regarding Pakistani Misdeeds

BK0305031996 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 2 May 96 p 8

[Editorial: "America's Blind Spot"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foremost question raised by the latest US State Department report on global terrorism is how much larger must the dossier be of Pakistan's violations of international law in Kashmir before the Clinton administration decides to act. The 1995 report goes further than earlier ones to list specific incidents and specific terrorist groups receiving official Pakistani support. Even though the State Department cites all this as "credible evidence" of Islamabad's complicity, there is no move to warn it, let alone put Pakistan on Washington's list of terrorist states. Indians have come to treat the Pakistan Government's denial of any involvement with the contempt it deserves. But disappointment with the US will be the unavoidable reaction when the State Department report is juxtaposed with Bill Clinton's formal notification to the US Congress scarcely a month ago on arms transfers to Pakistan. It is Clinton's view that the supply of US weapons would give his administration leverage in Islamabad, among other things, to combat terrorism. Evidently before and throughout 1995 Washington lacked sufficient clout in the matter of restraining Pakistan. India is entitled to ask whether the new arms transfers will achieve any purpose at all other than indirectly assisting Islamabad's relentless campaign to destabilise Kashmir.

Strong words were used at the Sharm el Sheikh summit on global terrorism by Clinton and his allies in West Asia. There was the promise about acting firmly against countries aiding and abetting acts of violence against others. Quite obviously, however, double standards prevail so that aiding terrorism in one context calls for stern action and not even a slap on the wrist in another. Washington's real concerns clearly do not extend beyond its own backyard and areas of strategic interest. In Haiti and Cuba, it has been ready to intervene militarily or with sanctions in the furtherance, it claims, of peace and the rule of law. In its efforts to isolate Iran, it leans heavily on countries around the world from the European Union to Russia, India and South Africa. But its most notorious blind spot remains the subcontinent where a major culprit is allowed to go scot-free. India would be content with a situation where the US stayed out of any kind of involvement. Instead, it has chosen a partisan approach which rewards the only country in the region which has for years had extra-territorial involvements. India should make clear that this is totally unacceptable.

India: Officials Cited on Intellectual Property Dispute With U.S.

BK0305032396 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 2 May 96 p 5

[Report by "our trade correspondent"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The US decision to initiate action against India under the World Trade Organisation's dispute settlement procedures because of its inadequate provisions to protect intellectual property rights is unlikely to hold much water as non-violation does not apply to TRIPS [trade-related aspects of intellectual property] agreement for the first five years, say senior government officials.

'Non-violation' is said to occur when a country has not directly violated any obligation (as per the earlier GATT agreement) but, in practice, the obligation is being circumvented. Although India has failed to formally establish a mailbox system for accepting product patents, its patent office has been receiving applications from American multinationals, officials added.

Experts pointed out that "while India cannot say that we have a mailbox in place the US cannot deny that applications are being received. No application has so far been rejected." As a result, there are no grounds under which a company can claim injury on account of this, they added.

The US complaint is against India's failure to legislatively establish mailbox and offer marketing exclusivity systems in accordance with Article 70(8) and 70(9) of the TRIPS agreement.

Commerce ministry officials refused to comment on the issue in the absence of the commerce secretary who is away to South Africa for the UNCTAD [UN Conference on Trade and Development]-9 meeting.

However, government sources aver that India was likely to take an official stand that it was against any form of unilateral action like putting her name on any list of any kind and that she was committed to meeting her TRIPS obligations.

Diplomatic sources and senior government officials pointed out that the US move is merely a threat to the incoming Indian government to "get its act together" and that unlike Pakistan's case where the USTR is notifying the WTO on May 1, action in India's case is contemplated in the "near future".

This is despite the fact that India figures on a "priority watch list" and Pakistan on the a watch lists, the former being the list of the greater offenders.

As per the TRIPS obligation, India is required to a provide a means by which applications for patents for such inventions can be filed". The "inventions" relate to the field of pharmaceutical and agriculture and chemical products.

As per India's present system, a clerk at the patents office accepts all patent applications regardless of whether it is a process or a product patent. Again, as per the system, the application comes up for examination almost two to two and a half years later.

Experts say as such no application has been rejected in India and it would not be possible for a any US company to claim to have been injured on account of India not passing the law". While the US pharmaceutical industry in general can claim to be hurt by India's patent laws, it cannot quantify loss on account of the failure "to legislatively establish mailbox and offer marketing exclusivity systems".

Further, sources expressed the view that the US was well aware of India's commitment to meet her TRIPS obligations and failure to do so was due to factors out of the control of the present government. In fact at a recent TRIPS council meeting in Geneva, the US mentioned Pakistan's failure on this count while India was not mentioned. This was apparently to hasten Pakistan's progress on the legislative front which, till the meeting, was close to nil.

Later, on April 8, Pakistan's cabinet approved an amendment to its patent law that includes a "mailbox provision" to take effect upon passage and other broadened patent protections to take effect in 2005. This amendment is now required to go to the National Assembly before becoming law. Experts say this explains why Pakistan is on a lower list of offenders though the US is taking dispute action against her immediately. In fact, an official US document with Business Standard clearly states: "To encourage quick passage, the Administration will initiate formal consultations with Pakistan under WTO settlement procedures".

Further, it is being argued that it will not be easy for the US to win a firm and valid case against India, which partly explains her hesitation to go to the WTO immediately.

Experts say the non-violation clause does not apply under the dispute settlement procedures to the TRIPS agreement for the first five years. As a result, this cannot be made the basis for the case. Further, since all applications are being accepted as per the present system, no specific case of material injury to the US domestic industry can be cited on account of failure to "legislatively establish mailbox and marketing exclusivity systems".

It is also significant that India's status has neither been upgraded nor downgraded on the watch list compiled by the USTR. However, India is not on the same list as China. In India's case, the USTR cannot impose any trade sanctions that adversely affect India's trade with the US since she is a member country and this will be considered a violation that India can take up as a dispute against the US.

It was also pointed out that for India to grant exclusive marketing rights to any US company, four conditions as per the agreement have to be met. The company should have a product patent application in India, it must have a product patent granted in some other member country, it must have marketing approvals granted in the that member country and it must have marketing approvals granted in India. Unless these four conditions are met, India is not required to give exclusive marketing rights. This, experts argue, has not happened in any case.

India: Saudi Leaders' Reference to Kashmir Termed 'Unnecessary'

BK0305093396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi has termed as totally unnecessary the reference made to Kashmir by Saudi Arabian leaders in their traditional message of hajj. Referring to their joint address, India drew their attention to its resolve to seek a peaceful solution to the issue by holding elections in Jammu and Kashmir. This is to give representation to the people of the state by democratic means. But Pakistan, by abetting terrorist activities, not only interferes in the internal affairs of India, but also makes a deliberate attempt to interfere in the democratic process to denying the basic rights to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

An External Affairs Ministry press release said India wants friendly countries like Saudi Arabia to support the democratic process and censure Pakistan for its attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of the neighboring country.

India: Rao, Chavan Confident of Success of Kashmir Policy

BK0305093096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister has expressed confidence that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are well on their way back into national mainstream. In an interview to IPA [INDIA PRESS AGENCY], Mr. Narasimha Rao expressed the hope that the popular government will help contain militancy and meet the aspirations of the people of the state.

Replying to questions, he asserted that the approvals for foreign investments will mainly be in the priority sector.

The home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, said the situation is right for elections in Jammu and Kahsmir, as the people are in the mood for it. Talking to newsmen in Mumbai [Bombay] today, Mr. Chavan said that even insurgents leaders met him and expressed opposition to the gun culture in the valley. Mr. Chavan said the idea of insurgent leaders coming forward to meet him could not have even been visualized four years back.

India: Commentary Emphasizes Need To Ban Land Mines

BK0305062796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 3 May 96

[Commentary by Major General Dipanker Bannerjee, Defense Analyst]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The most devastating weapon of our times is not the nuclear bomb or missile or guns, it is the cheap, unglamorous, yet highly lethal land mine. Presently, some 100 million of these are planted in about 64 countries around the world. Most of these are in the least developed states — Cambodia, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and in some Saharan Africa. Every month, they cause around 2,000 casualties. If no more mines were to be laid, it will still take 1,100 years to clear the globe of all mines and cost $33 billion.

Land mines are of two types. Anti-personnel mines that typically weigh a few hundred grams, cost around 100 rupees, and kill and maim an individual for ever. An anti-tank mine weighs around 10 kilograms and targets a tank or a vehicle. As they stop tanks in their tracks, these may be said to have value in war. The same can hardly be said about anti-personnel mines that are utterly indiscriminate in their devastation. There has also been a quantum increase in the number of mines that can now be laid. From about 50 mines per hour in the Second World War, 3,000 mines can now be delivered more than 40 kilometers away in one salvo of a mortar or a multibarrel rocket launcher. This has changed the very concept of use of the anti-personnel land mines. From purely defensive, it has now been transformed into an offensive weapon. Another important development is the use of this cheap option of destruction by nonstate groups such as insurgents and terrorists.

This is why anti-personnel land mines are now considered to breach international humanitarian law regarding legitimate weapons and a strong case has been made to ban them under certain conditions. At the initiative of France, a series of conferences have been held to review the 1980 UN convention that restricts certain conventional weapons that are considered excessively injurious. A group of government experts met thrice in 1994 and once again in 1995. No satisfactory conclusion could be found. There is a powerful export lobby of land mines. Some others would like to retain their technological edge of using remote delivery mines to reduce casualty to their own troops.

A final conference is currently in session in Geneva and is to close today. According to the BBC and Red Cross reports, the conference is likely to end without any agreement. This is due to Pakistan's strong objections. Islamabad apparently considers land mines necessary for its defense. It is a pity that a narrow parochial approach utterly without logic or reason, and against the grain of international public opinion is allowing this weapon to be perpetuated. Pakistan will have to bear on its conscience the thousands of ruined lives of innocent people around the globe.

India: Delhi Reports 'Moderate to Heavy' Polling

BK0205164496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moderate to heavy polling has been reported in the second phase of the Lok Sabha and assembly elections. Initial estimates put the overall percentage at between 50 and 60. Except for stray incidents of violence in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, the voting was peaceful. Five persons were killed in poll related violence in Bihar. A subinspector [of police] was killed and three others injured in a land mine blast in Andhra Pradesh.

Briefing newspersons, the election commissioner, Mr. G.V.G. Krishnamurthy, expressed satisfaction at the conduct of the poll. He said there has been only a few incidents of snatching of ballot papers in Orissa, Bihar, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh. The election commissioner said repolling may be necessary in 11 polling stations in Hanamkonda parliamentary constituency in Andhra Pradesh. Our correspondent reports:

[Begin recording] The second phase of the poll battle to decide who will rule the country for the next five years passed off peacefully today. Voting has now taken place in about two-thirds of the total 543 Lok Sabha constituencies. The polling is also complete for five out of the six state assemblies for which elections are also taking place. A distinct feature of the elections this time is the absence of large-scale violence which used to disrupt the polls in the past. Even in states like Bihar, which has a history of poll rigging and violence, only a few incidents are reported. The extra security measures taken by the Election Commission and preventive arrests seem to have paid off. Polling was also peaceful in the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh where a poll boycott call had been given by some groups agitating for a separate Uttarakhand state. M.P. Radhakrishnan reporting from Delhi. [end recording]

In Uttar Pradesh, moderate to brisk polling is reported in several constituencies. We take you to Lucknow for a report from the Hindi heartland.

[Begin recording] Polling in 33 Lok Sabha constituencies which went to polls in the first phase today passed off by and large peacefully. According to the state's chief electoral officer over 400 persons were arrested in the hill region for disrupting the polling, but it continued uninterrupted. Moderate to brisk polling has been reported from several constituencies. Reports received from the rural areas indicate that old and young voters evinced keen interest. According to the report available 50 to 55 percent polling was recorded in the different constituencies. This is Munira reporting from Lucknow. [end recording]

In Bihar, barring some violent incidents, the first phase of parliamentary elections passed off peacefully today. In 20 out of 54 Lok Sabha constituencies, 50 to 55 percent voting has been reported. Five persons were killed in Siwan and Vaishali districts in shooting and bomb explosions. In addition, 25 persons were injured in separate incidents. Reports of tearing of ballot papers and snatching of ballot boxes have come in from Madhubani, Samastipur, Barh, Darbhanga, Vaishali, Sitamari, Saharsa, and Gopalganj areas.

Rajasthan reported about 45 percent polling. People of 19 villages spread over five constituencies boycotted the elections to press their demand for proper roads and supply of water and electricity.

Polling was held for 20 Lok Sabha seats in Madhya Pradesh. Our Bhopal correspondent is on the line:

[Begin recording] An estimated about 50 percent voters today exercised their franchise in the 20 constituencies. The polling remained by and large peaceful, and was marked by impressive turnout of voters almost everywhere. What is striking is the fact that all the constituencies this time have registered an increase over the voting percentage of the last general elections. Even in the Naxalite [Maoist guerrillas]-affected area, the situation is much better than what it had been in the past. This improvement is all the more important in view of the sweeping heat wave and the reported call for the poll boycott by Naxalites. This is Masud Ahmad reporting from Bhopal. [end recording]

Polling in 12 out of 21 Lok Sabha constituencies in Orissa passed off peacefully. Preliminary reports received in Bhubaneswar indicate that about 50 percent voters exercised their franchise. In Nowrangpur constituency, polling in three booths were adjourned due to attacks by Naxalites last night. In Aska constituency, four booths were captured by miscreants.

In Arunachal Pradesh, about 50 percent voting has been reported for the two Lok Sabha seats. According to state election office sources at Itanagar, except a few minor incidents the polling was peaceful. In some polling booths in Tirap District, a 100 percent voter turnout has been recorded, while the lowest voting of 25 percent has been reported in East Kameng District.

In Meghalaya, 50 to 60 percent of the electorate cast their ballot for the two Lok Sabha seats from the state. Reports reaching the state capital, Shillong, say polling passed off peacefully. Voters in three polling stations boycotted the elections in protest against their pending demands.

In West Bengal, about 65-70 percent voters exercised their franchise in the first phase of election to 20 parliamentary seats and 140 assembly constituencies. We go over to Calcutta for details:

[Begin recording] About 70 percent polling is reported from different districts; however, in Darjeeling, polling was only 45 percent. Elections to 20 parliamentary and 140 assembly constituencies spreading over 12 districts passed off more or less peacefully. Barring a case of police firing at Harishchandrapur in Malda District and a stabbing in Jangipara in Murshidabad District, there is no report of untoward incident. The chief electoral officer of the state informed that polling was suspended in two polling stations of Malda and two others in Murshidabad District following snatching of ballot papers. This is Suneet Chakrabarty reporting from Calcutta. [end recording]

About 60 percent voters exercised their franchise for 20 Lok Sabha and one assembly seat in Andra Pradesh. Polling was by and large peaceful except one incident in which a police personnel was killed and three others injured when their vehicle was hit by a land mine laid by suspected Naxalites at Sirikonda village in Nizamabad District.

In Karnataka, 55-60 percent polling was recorded from 10 constituencies, which went to the polls in the second phase today. In Chitradurga constituency, repolling was ordered in one booth following the stamping of ballot papers by a mob. Police had to fire in the air to disperse the violent mob. In 19 villages, voters boycotted the elections demanding civic amenities.

In Tamil Nadu, about 62 percent polling was recorded in the second phase of elections for 83 assembly and 14 Lok Sabha seats. Over to Madras for a report:

[Begin recording] The second and final phase of polling in Tamil Nadu to the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies and 83 assembly seats was by and large peaceful. Polling, which began on a dull note, later gained momentum and at the close of the day touched over 60 percent. Bracing the hot sun, men turned out in larger numbers than women and rural voters outnumbered their urban counterparts. The chief electoral officer of the state has called for special reports from the district administration following large-scale complaints of noninclusion of voters in the lists in certain areas. Kancheepuram assembly segment, famous for silk production, has registered the highest turnout of 69 percent while Radhakrishnanagar recorded the lowest of 45 percent. This is Ganeshan from Madras. [end recording]

In Gujarat, the first phase of polling for 12 constituencies of a total of 20 seats ended peacefully. According to preliminary reports, 35-40 percent of the electorate exercised their franchise. Polling, which began on a dull note, picked up in the afternoon. Voters of some villages of Amreli, Chotaudaipur, Kaira, and Anand constituencies stayed away protesting against nonfulfillment of their local demands.

In Goa, 40 percent polling has been recorded for two Lok Sabha seats. Our Panaji correspondent reports that polling, which began on a dull note, did not pick up even when the day advanced.

In Maharashtra, initial reports put 55 percent polling in the elections for 24 out of 48 Lok Sabha constituencies and by-election in one assembly constituency. Our Bombay correspondent says:

[Begin recording] Peaceful polling was reported in Vidarbha, Marathwada, and northern parts of the state forming 24 out of 48 Lok Sabha constituencies and in the Parola assembly constituency. According to initial reports, about 55 percent of the total of over 2.5 crore voters cast their votes today. There are no reports of violence during polling in all these 24 constituencies. Out of about 1,000 sensitive polling booths in the state, a majority of about 725 are in Gadchiroli District. Even in these Naxalite-affected areas, polling was not only peaceful but also somewhat heavier with the initial reports of 65-70 percent turnout. This is Mohan Chandak reporting from Mumbai [Bombay].

For the lone parliamentary seat in Sikkim, about 40 percent polling was recorded. The polling, which began on a sluggish note in the morning due to inclement weather, later picked up.

India: Daily Reports Factionalism, Rivalry in BJP

BK0205151196 Varanasi AJ in Hindi 19 Apr 96 p 9

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Text] New Delhi, 18 Apr (AJ News Service) — At this election time, factionalism within the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] is at its peak. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi is angry for having been ignored in the election campaign, while General Secretary K.N. Govindacharya is upset because the party's other General Secretary Pramod Mahajan has been assigned sole charge of managing election affairs. Religious mendicant Uma Bharati has refused to come to Delhi for campaigning because the party has fielded Vijay Goel for the Sadar Lok Sabha constituency. Vijay Goel had been linked with the "dressing room incident" at the grand party convention in Bombay.

On the other hand, Swami Vamdev, a frontline leader of the Ayodhya movement, has become disenchanted with the BJP and has dissociated himself not only from the BJP but also from the World Hindu Council. Firebrand orator Sadhvi Ritambhara is so enraged that she has refused to march from city to city to mobilize support for the BJP.

An anonymous pamphlet distributed at the party headquarters recently has also become a focus of discussion these days. In this typed leaflet, serious allegations have been made against the party president, as well as his kith and kin and near and dear ones. Not only that, some vulgar accusations concerning the character of the party president's "coterie" [preceding word in English] have also been made and played up.

Renowned advocate Arun Jetli, who has been supervising election arrangements at the party headquarters in the absence of Pramod Mahajan, appears to be considerably worried over the leaflet. Some party leaders secretly admit that this internal propaganda war is the direct result of a rivalry between the two factions of the party.

According to party sources, Murli Manohar Joshi camp is rejoicing over the fact that even the second phase of Lal Krishna Advani's cross-country chariot journey for a good government has not had any noteworthy impact on the masses. The Joshi camp is still piqued over the manner in which Advani supporters had thwarted Joshi's unity journey.

At the national level, however, campaign responsibilities have been entrusted only to Vajpayee and Advani. The party has not thought it necessary to fly Dr. Joshi — one of the party triumvirs — across the length and breadth of the country to campaign. Some sources believe that Dr. Joshi's wings have been clipped by the party high command, and that is why his activities have been confined to Allahabad only.

Faces of major party leaders, like Kalyan Singh, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, Sunderlal Patwa, Sunder Singh Bhandari, Kushabhao Thackrey, O. Rajagopal, Janakrishnamurthy, and Sikander Bakht, have not been included in the video cassettes the party has produced for election campaigning. These cassettes, which will be shown in more than 3,000 cinema halls in the country, contain pictures of only Atal Behari Vajpayee, Manohar Joshi, L.K. Advani, Pramod Mahajan and his relatives, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Gopinath Munde, Sushma Swaraj, and Uma Bharati. Some party sources admit that a great deal of political rivalry was also witnessed in the selection of the faces that were to be included in these videocassettes.

India: Poll—Haryana Looks to Bansi Lal for Better Government

BK0105111496 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 28 Apr 96 p 9

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Three-fourths of the electorate want a change of government in Haryana, according to the TIMESPOLL conducted by CMS. Corruption ranks high among the causes for dissatisfaction with the present government followed by "anti-poor policies", lack of development and unemployment.

Bansi Lal's Haryana Vikas Party (HVP) is considered by 40 per cent as best suited to rule the state, as against support of only 22 per cent for the Congress and 13 per cent for the Samata Party. The HVP's support is broad-based, spanning both urban and rural voters, while the Samata Party draws its strength primarily from rural areas. The Congress has a quarter of the support of the trading and business class, government servants and labourers. The farmers who are the backbone of Haryana's economy are rooting for the HVP and the Samata Party.

Bansi Lal is personally more popular by far as a leader and has a broad base of support among urban as well as rural voters, and men as well as women. Bhajan Lal is relatively more popular in urban areas where the Congress has better support. Devi Lal and O.P. Chautala are more popular in rural areas.

Jats constitute a major chunk (22 per cent) of the Haryana electorate. The Jat vote is divided between the HVP and the Samata Party. But as an individual leader and choice as chief minister, Bansi Lal has a definite edge with 45 per cent of the Jat voters preferring him to his rivals, Devi Lal and Chautala, who together get one third support.

The Haryana survey by CMS was carried out in 10 representative assembly constituencies, one from each of the 10 Lok Sabha constituencies. In all, 1,350 randomly selected voters were interviewed in the state. Of these, 850 voters were interviewed in the first phase which was conducted between April 7 and 15 as a part of the all-India survey for the Lok Sabha forecast.

In the second phase a booster sample of 500 voters was drawn and surveyed between April 18 and 23. The sampling methodology and the analytical framework followed were the same as used for the Lok Sabha forecast. The survey results are subject to a margin of error of 3 to 5 per cent. For example, if a vote share of 30 per cent is predicted for a party, the actual value could lie between 28.5 and 31.5 percent.

Times Poll by CMS, Haryana Assembly, 1996

Party	Percentage of respondents
Congress	22
BJP	4
HVP	40
Samata	13
Others	14
None	2
Can't say	5

Leader	Pecentage of respondents
Bansi Lal	44
Bhajan Lal	19
Devi Lal	17
O P Chautala	11

Voters' Mood	Percentage of respondents
Can't say	3
No preference	4
Want the present state govt re-elected	19
Want a change	74

Issues of greatest concern	Percentage of respondents
Corruption	28
Anti-poor policies	17
Lack of development	15
Unemployment	6

India: Parliamentary Confusion Foreseen

96AS0022B Jalandhar PUNJAB KESARI in Hindi 15 Apr 96 p 6

[Article by M J. Akbar: "After the Election, Confusion Will Surface"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The English word "shock" is a five-letter word which does not apply to Indian politicians. It appears that all of them have become shock proof. Therefore, it would be hyperbolic to say that Madhav Rao Scindia was shocked when the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] removed its candidate from Gwalior and endorsed Scindia when he failed to get a ticket from the Congress (I) Party. This must have surprised him, but it does not appear that he was shocked.

Actually, when the BJP gave this gift to Scindia, his vocabulary definitely was pleasing and he was full of welcome as when an angry son returns home to his parents. His mother, the veteran BJP leader Rajmata Scindia, has been alienated from him for a long time. When she announced that she was going to campaign in support of her son in Gwalior, it appeared natural. Whoever wants to comment may say that though he was in the Congress (I) for the last 15 years, he must have had some attraction for the saffron color [BJP] all this time.

When the BJP offered to support Scindia, perhaps he got a bit worried. Yet the BJP did not hesitate to offer Scindia its help. The fact is that BJP's strategy was motivated by another goal. It wanted to take advantage of Gwalior district people by having Rao and Scindia clash. Now the situation has reached a point where the Janata Dal friends of this prince who has rebelled from the Congress (I) are suspicious of him.

We should now look at the possible results of the general election in the context of forecasts, from those made by the Intelligence Bureau to those of astrologers. An average these estimates forecast the Congress (I) to win 170 seats, the BJP 180, and the third front to get 130 seats. The remaining seats will go to regional parties and independent candidates. Now, if the BJP is the largest party in the Lok Sabha, it needs help from regional parties. It can win a majority only if the Congress (I) or the National Front are split. In the present situation, such a possibility cannot be overlooked. If leaders like George Fernandes and Chandra Shekhar can shake hands with the BJP, why cannot others do the same? As for the question of Congress (I) splitting up, its "leaders" would do anything for power.

The campaign to stop the BJP from forming a government has begun. However, this campaign can fail on the question of who will be the prime minister. Mr. Narasimha Rao will be have the strongest claim to become the prime minister, but there are many hurdles for him. One faction of Congress (I) legislators believe that Mr. Rao, instead of trying to keep the party in position to remain in power, has pushed it downhill. Rebels like Arjun Singh, Tiwari, and Scindia express this opinion openly. Any Congress government that wants their support has to pay the price in the form of removing Narasimha Rao from power. Other people ask, why is Narasimha Rao so indispensable? Why not pick another prime minister, form a non-BJP coalition government, and enjoy the government for the next five years?

Narasimha Rao also has supporters who are very close to him. They know that if Rao is removed from power, there will be no opportunity for them to become cabinet ministers. In addition, he has a large number of southern legislators who support him. They would prefer Mr. Rao to be the prime minister over Karunakaran, the other contender from south. With Kerala's 10 and Andhra's 30 legislators, the Congress (I) can be very influential in the south. It would be especially true if Moopnar, the dissenting Congress leader from Tamil Nadu hints to Rao that davidra Munnetra Kazhagam [DMK] leader Karunanidhi in Tamil Nadu is willing to endorse Rao's government if he (Karunanidhi) is given the industries and trade portfolio in the cabinet. Mr. Rao will not be able to discuss the cabinet positions, however, he can welcome DMK in the name of stability. As for the Congress' parliamentary committee, Rao has plenty of support from the South and Maharashtra and this support is expected to remain. Many Maharashtra legislators do not like Sharad Pawar and they want Rao to remain the prime minister.

The first job for Mr. Rao after the election would be to call a meeting of the newly-elected Congress parliamentary group. His first effort in that meeting would be to have the Congress (I) parliamentary group elect a leader unanimously. If this does not happen he will have to take the path of majority vote. In this situation, he will have only one serious challenger—Sharad Pawar.

Sharad Pawar is already feeling that he does not have as many legislators with him now as he had in 1991 when he had challenged Narasimha Rao's leadership. Other leaders who could have challenged Rao either already have been expelled from the party. These people either have been denied tickets because of their involvement in Hawala case or they have resigned from the Congress.

The BJP think tank is considering all these possibilities in their closed-door late night meetings. They are wondering what steps the party needs to take for the nation's first BJP prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee. It is possible that a saffron flag might be raised on the Red Fort as a symbol. This could be symbolic statement regarding the end of Aurangzeb's rule!

The second day perhaps will be used for resting. Ministers will go to their office with small groups. Murali Manohar Joshi will get the home ministry, Jaswant Singh will get the defense ministry and the prime minister will keep the foreign ministry under him. They will find that the busy bureaucrats are very polite, but are not willing to say what they think. They will also be waiting, like the rest of the nation, for the time when the new government gains a majority in the Lok Sabha. That is when they will take further steps seriously. That fact is there will be no majority government now. Efforts will be made to get support from George Fernandes and Chandra Shekhar and even the smaller parties will not think realistically about supporting other parties because their support will not really make a difference.

The idea of BJP forming a government or even its possibility can act as a tonic for other parties and they will get an opportunity to unite against it. [passage omitted]

The BJP think tank, after visualizing the possibility of a shaky BJP government, may decide that the BJP should not form a government and let Rao establish his minority government. They can benefit from the problems and crises that this government will face. [passage omitted]

India: News From Delhi Radio Available on Internet

BK0205161196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] AIR news is now available on internet. Internet users anywhere in the world can access the news items free of charge just by a flick of the button.

Internet is a worldwide network on computer in which thousands of networks have joined together. AIR information service has been started today as an experimental pilot service.

Iran

Iran: Tehran Discusses Khamene'i Messages, Exhortations

NC0205095696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 2 May 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the great leader of the Islamic Revolution, met a group of workers, professors, teachers, and students from countrywide yesterday.

He again highlighted our country's current position internationally and the Iranian nation's clear outlook and stated: By the grace of God and with the blessings of the lord of the ages—may God expedite his noble advent—Islamic Iran will be a shining sun, the rays of which will illuminate every country. Every nation will be infused with their spirit and joy.

The leader of the Islamic Revolution stressed that there is increasing scope for the multifaceted exaltation of the Iranian people—morally and materially. He asserted that despite the enemies' efforts the country has forged ahead in every area and he described Islamic Iran as an area of greatness, one with the brilliance of Islamic tenets, spiritual, and a sign of mankind's salvation.

His eminence has, on previous occasions, reiterated the mission of the revolutionary Iranian nation in laying the foundations of a bright civilization based on the divine injunctions of Islam and stressed that the hopeful eyes of Islamic nations are focused on Iran. Our people should present a successful model of the supremacy of a system based on Islamic tenets and values to the world.

On other occasions the great leader of the Islamic Revolution has delineated the correct course of the quest to exalt Islam and the nation and has provided the necessary guidance for successfully and swiftly traversing this path. In the great leader of the Islamic Revolution's Nowruz messages, especially in the past three years, he has emphasized the need to implement social and economic discipline, practice work ethics, and abstain from extravagance, and provided exhortations on priorities and the quality of the performance of the three branches of government, that is, the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary.

Finally, his reference in yesterday's message to the need to follow the correct direction in work to elicit God's pleasure and closeness indicates a unified axis. Moving along it an individual can achieve the best exaltation he can. The outlook described by the great leader of the Islamic Revolution will then emerge.

Another important point in the remarks of the great leader of the Islamic Revolution yesterday was the repeated emphasis on the honor and independence of the Muslim Iranian nation and the need to safeguard this great asset of the Islamic Revolution. It is obvious that without doing so every action on the path to moral progress would be sterile and every kind of material development in society would ultimately be doomed to fail.

Iran: Army To Stage Biggest Ever Military Exercise 'Soon'

LD0205121896 Tehran IRNA in English 1142 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 2, IRNA — The army's ground forces will stage their largest ever military exercise code-named "Velayat" at Kushk-e-Nusrat region on the outskirts of the holy city of Qom soon.

The publicity department of the armed forces said in a statement that several infantry and armoured divisions with hundreds of modern tanks and artillery batteries would be employed to carry out the war games.

The aim of the maneuvers is to display part of the strength of the Iranian ground forces, the statement said.

The air defence and engineering and telecommunication units along with hundreds of fighter bombers and helicopter-gunships of Havaniruz (army aviation service) will take part in the military exercises.

Iran: President Warns U.S. Against 'Locking Horns' With Iran

NC0205073196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani met university staff and students and cultural figures of Shiraz yesterday and said he appreciated the pure popular fervor and sentiments expressed to the officials of the hallowed Islamic system who serve them. He said: The United States should realize, in view of this popular support, that plotting against Islamic Iran is a big mistake and locking horns with the great Iranian nation will yield nothing but failure and defeat.

According to the Central News Unit, the president added: There is no doubt that if the Americans were to see this eloquent spectacle that is this presence of our people, they would understand why Iranian officials adopt such major and fundamental decisions and would conclude that they should refrain from inimical actions against the great Iranian nation.

The president stated: The United States and its supporters have repeatedly sustained setbacks due to the firm determination and will of the Iranian people. The latest conspicuous example of the defeat of the United States and Israel was seen in south Lebanon, where the rightfulness of the true combatants and Islamic Iran's principled stance of peaceseeking and free thinking were affirmed.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Islamic Iran proved in the rightful struggle of the Lebanese nation that, contrary to U.S. claims, it is not isolated; it also plays a valuable role in fostering peace and stability.

The president, who was addressing the staff and students of Shiraz University and cultural personalities to mark Teachers Day yesterday, conveyed his greetings on this important day and described the progress and upgrading of society—scientifically and culturally—as hopeful for Islamic Iran.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani paid tribute to the services of martyred Professor Morteza Motahheri, who shed his blood for the pride and exaltation of Iran's culture and history. Teachers Day auspiciously coincided with the anniversary of his martyrdom. He expressed the hope that instructors in the country would learn from Professor Motahheri's methods and disposition.

The president expressed his pleasure at the increasing presence of women in scientific and cultural centers and said: An educated woman can be a better mother and teacher of the next generation of our country. The women of today's society have affirmed their capability and aptitude in the social and scientific fields with their successful presence. No one can deny the importance of the role of this part of Iran's population for the country.

Concluding his remarks, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani stressed the government's support for the growing number of universities and paying attention to the wishes and demands of the teachers, staff, and students as far as possible.

The report said President Hashemi-Rafsanjani presented merit plaques and prizes for model teaching to 12 teachers in Shiraz during the ceremonies.

Operations to build the science complex at Shiraz University in Ku ye-Eram commenced in the presence of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani yesterday. According to the Central News Unit, the complex will be constructed over an area of 32 hectares and will include faculties of physics, chemistry, environmental studies, geology, mathematics, statistics, and computer studies and have an administration center. The complex can accommodate 2,000 students in the various specialized fields. It can take 7,850 students on the higher doctorate level.

The dormitory for married students at Ku-ye Eram was inaugurated in the presence of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. It can house 150 student families on a 9,700-square-meter site.

Iran: Afghan Envoy Views 'Contradictory' Taleban Statements

LD0205190696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on contradictory statements by the Taleban spokesmen on their readiness to withdraw their fighters from around Kabul city, Sayd Mohammad Khairkhah, the Afghan ambassador in Tehran, has said that this is because of sharp differences among the Taleban's leaders, the absence of a clear political program, the lack of a common objective, differences of opinion, and the need for specific leadership in this group.

In an interview with an IRNA correspondent, Sayd Mohammad Khairkhah added: Experience has revealed that no one can rely on the contradictory assurances given by the Taleban group, because there are profound differences among those who keep this movement going.

He added that the only point of agreement among the so-called Taleban leaders is to oppose the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, to insist on warmongering slogans, and to reject every plan to talk with the government.

Iran: Afghan Ambassador on Division Among Taleban Leaders

LD0305093596 Tehran IRNA in English
0909 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 2, IRNA — The Afghan ambassador to Iran has said that the contradictory statements made by Taleban's spokesmen on the group's readiness to retreat from Kabul's suburbs stemmed from wide division among Taleban leaders, lack of a definite political policy and of a unified motive in the militia faction.

Talking to IRNA, Afghan diplomat Seyyed Mohammad Kheyrkhah said on Thursday [2 May] that past experiences showed that one could not trust Taleban leaders at all.

The only point shared by the so-called Taleban leaders is that they are all opposed to the Islamic government of Afghanistan, insist on their war mongering slogans and reject any plan on talks with the Kabul government.

Kheyrkhah said that in case no change is made in current situation, dealing a heavy blow on Taleban would be the only way to force them to come to their sense and agree to negotiate with the government.

As for Hekmatyar's recent agreement with the Afghan Government and its impact on the peace process, Kheyrkhah said that the strategy of the Islamic government in Kabul was based on peace and that Afghan officials would concentrate their efforts on talks with all political groups in order to restore a permanent peace to Afghanistan.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Kheyrkhah thanked Iran for his recent efforts to convince Taleban to retreat from Kabul in order to pave the way for restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

A high-ranking delegation, headed by a member of the Taleban's central council and governor general of Herat Yar Mohammad arrived in Mashhad (Khorasan Province) last week upon the frequent requests of the Herat governor general for talks with Iranian officials on the Afghan crisis.

Yar Mohammad said at the end of his visit to Iran that he had reached an agreement with Iranian officials on the withdrawal of Taleban forces from around Kabul. But a day later, Vakil Ahmad, a spokesman for the Taleban denied such an agreement had been reached.

Iran: Daily Voices Concern Over U.S. Moves in Afghanistan

NC0305091496 Mashhad KHORASAN in Persian
23 Apr 96 pp 1, 11

[Political commentary: "New Developments in U.S. Policy in Afghanistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The five-day visit by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robin Raphel to Pakistan and Afghanistan and her earlier meeting with General Dostam, the leader of the National Islamic Movement of North Afghanistan, and with opponents of the Rabbani government in the United States; the renewal of military relations between the United States and Afghanistan—all these indicate a new development in U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

As regards the importance of the issue, one point that merits mention is that Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati was in Pakistan on the same day Robin Raphel arrived and was conferring with Pakistani leaders on Afghanistan. At the same time, his deputy 'Alla'eddin Borujerdi visited Afghanistan and held talks with the leaders of that country, including Borhanoddin Rabbani.

Immediately after her visit to Islamabad, Robin Raphel arrived in Afghanistan and held talks with government officials and members of opposition groups. She met Rabbani on Saturday [20 April]. Robin Raphel's visit to Pakistan took place soon after the U.S. Government agreed to send military equipment worth $360 million that had been suspended by Congress for the past six years.

One may add that a while ago, the Afghanistan issue had been discussed seriously in the UN Security Council. There is no doubt that such attention by the Security Council is related to the interest of the permanent Security Council members, and the United States in particular. All these events indicate—without any analysis or explanation—a review of its policy by the United States regarding its interests in Afghanistan. Even a year or two ago and until recently, Afghanistan did not feature very prominently among the United States' serious interests, and of course this was the reason for the complaints of the Afghan leaders.

One of the United States' major problems is that the Iranian Government, which is the United States' strategic opponent in the region, has considerable clout and influence in Afghanistan.

The United States and Pakistan can well recall their joint scenarios, that is, the Taleban group, which could not succeed in Afghanistan due to the combined efforts of Tehran and Kabul. However, the governments of

Iran and Pakistan have numerous common and at times, strategic interests. So far they have even made joint efforts to convince the warring factions in Afghanistan to achieve a rapprochement.

However, recently the interests of the two governments have undergone an obvious dichotomy with regard to Afghanistan, especially concerning the role of the Borhanoddin Rabbani government and the Taleban movement.

The U.S. Government considers Pakistan its ally in the region. Except for a five-year hiatus in its military assistance to Pakistan one can say that during its entire contemporary history, Pakistan has been linked to U.S. interests in one way or the other.

Accordingly, the multifaceted U.S. political-military assistance to Pakistan and its late former military dictator Ziaul-Haq against India (a former Soviet ally), as well as joint military cooperation between the two countries on assistance to Afghan groups during the rule of the communist regime in Kabul, can be mentioned in this context.

Now with the resumption of the U.S. military aid to Pakistan, which has initially been approved at $360 million, the Islamabad-Washington bond is once again being strengthened. The United States views Pakistan as a regional government and is concerned by the Pakistani Government's increasing influence in Afghanistan and will on principle try to change the situation to conform to its own interests in the region.

Iran: U.S. Journalist Urged To Name Contacts To Stop Accusations

LD0205192096 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 14

["The way to stop accusations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The press has reported that an American journalist has expressed concern that we might publish articles from him that might hint at [U.S.] friendship with Iran. In view of the enmity that exists these days between Iran and the United States as well as the social and political role and position of the [journalist's] newspaper, the above act would have led to criticism by his editor.

We hope that you could tell this journalist that last year we had a group in our country — who were initially 134 people but were gradually reduced — who claimed that there was no freedom in Iran and when they wanted to speak in defense of the United States, there was much protest. But the difference is that the protests were not from their governments or their editors, but the public opinion of the Muslim and revolutionary people who did not allow the group to serve the West and the United States freely. The group members therefore decided to gather their things and collectively move to live next to the White House!

To be free from the accusations of friendship with Iran and the people of this revolutionary country, it would be sufficient for the American journalist to name one of these 134 good contacts to the philanthropist statesmen of the United States. This would solve all problems and would leave him free of any accusations!

Iran: Editorial Views Israeli, U.S. Plot Against Lebanon

LD0205093196 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 28 Apr 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Israel & U.S. Failed in Their Plot Against Lebanon"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] No matter what propaganda is launched by the Zionist-oriented media, the fact is that both the U.S. and Israel have failed in their 16-day military adventurism in Lebanon.

There is no doubt that the 16-day carnage was preplanned with specific objectives. We can summarize the unhealthy objectives of the Zionists in the following ways:

A. Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, through massacre of the innocent people in Lebanon, wanted to attract the attention of electorals [as received] who have to go to the polling booths very soon.

Before March, the Labour Party of Peres was trailing behind the rival Likud. The USA, in early March, fielded the idea of Sharm al-Shaykh summit which was attended by the leaders of some 20 countries. The summit was another failure on the Israeli opinion poll.

In order to attract the votes of the extremist Jewish community, Peres government launched air, land, and sea offensives against Lebanese people on April 11 which apparently terminated last Thursday [25 April].

Israel and the United States, by targeting civilians, were trying to present the image of Hezbollah as 'trouble makers.' This is the reason that besides the civilians, Lebanese economic centers including electricity power stations were also targets of brutal Zionist attacks.

Both Israel and the United States, through pressure tactics, were vainly thinking that the Lebanese would force Hezbollah to get rid of their weapons. But the plot engineered by the Zionists failed. And today more than any day in the past, the Hezbollah are committed to combat Zionists as long as their land is under occupation.

B. Another equally important aspect of the 16-day Israeli atrocities is that the U.S. image as mediator had become denty [as received] not only in the eyes of the Middle Eastern countries but also in Europe.

During the hectic peace overtures, French, Italian, and Russian foreign ministers were present in the region. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrived in the region early last week and boasted that he would bring about peace in a few hours. It took him seven days to silence guns of both sides.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and termination of the Cold War, it was the first time that Europe openly drew a line between the affairs of international nature and America through their presence at the crucial juncture of the peace negotiations in the region.

The presence of European, Russian, and Iranian foreign ministers helped carve 'understanding' for peace. But one should expect any development as long as the source of tension - occupation of South Lebanon - exists.

In the light of these facts, it can undoubtedly be said that both Israel and the United States have failed in their nasty mission.

Iran: Commentary on VOA Report on Majles, U.S. Terrorism Report

LD0105210596 Tehran IRAN in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 16

[Unattributed commentary: "What else is new?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] First news item is that (Laurie Catman), the Voice of America's Middle East bureau correspondent in Cairo, has produced a report on the fifth Majles elections. He says: "The results of the elections show that the conservative faction, with the support of individual deputies, could easily gain the majority of seats in the Majles. Conservatives managed to win 22 seats in Tehran, but, because there is not a clear party system in Iran, it is difficult to judge the true number of votes won by the conservative reformist and leftist factions, and the new Majles's political tendencies will not be clear until the first round of voting." [passage omitted]

Finally, the U.S. State Department's annual report on countries it regards as sponsors of terrorism will be published on 30 April.

A State Department spokesman has said: "The publication of the report will be no surprise, because, as before, Cuba, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, Iraq, and Syria are included in the list."

Of course, the Americans openly supported the extensive Israeli attacks against the people of Lebanon.

Iran: U.S. 'Shameless Support' of Israel's 'Terrorism' Viewed

LD0105201396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 1 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following two weeks of war and destruction and the creation of an atmosphere of terror and fear among the Lebanese civilians by the U.S. and Zionist regimes, the rulers of these two countries signed an agreement on fighting terrorism yesterday. The agreement was signed by the Zionist prime minister, Shim'on Peres, and U.S. President Bill Clinton on 30 April 30. Based on this agreement, the U.S. Congress will allocate 100 million dollars' worth of sophisticated police and military equipment to Tel Aviv.

The $100 million aid by Washington in suppressive equipment to the terrorist Zionist regime, which will be used against the Palestinian and Lebanese oppressed nations, is an issue that has once more brought to world attention the anti-human nature of the Zionist usurpers of Palestine, especially at a time coinciding with the formation of death squads in occupied Palestine. In fact the Zionist boss, who is also the Zionist minister of war, has travelled to the United States at a time that, following his completely defeated Grapes of Wrath operation against Lebanese women and children, he has now formed death squads to assassinate Lebanese freedom fighters inside Lebanese borders.

Considering these factors, shameless support by the United States for the criminal behavior of the illegitimate Zionist regime, which has now ended in Washington's agreement to send more economic and military aid to that internationally despicable regime, is an issue that cannot be easily overlooked at this juncture. According to political analysts, the signing of the anti-terrorism agreement by the two mentioned regimes immediately following the 16-day massacre of the Lebanese women and children by the two internationally infamous countries has turned world public opinion toward the closely-knit Washington-Tel Aviv interest, which can be read as nothing but Clinton and Peres's election stakes. Undoubtedly Clinton's support for the terrorist operation of the child-killing Zionists and praising the little regime occupying Palestine for its mass murder in Lebanon is a move that cannot be viewed outside the U.S. President's election campaign strategy. Everyone knows that Clinton has already done everything but beg to secure the American Zionist post for himself in the upcoming U.S. presidential elections.

On the other hand, following his severe defeat in Lebanon and failure to obtain any of his pre-planned goals in that country, the Zionist boss, Peres, has launched desperate efforts to cover up his total frustration in Lebanon. The signing of a joint defense pact with the White House and, now, the signing of the anti-terrorist agreement are moves that indicate none other than a propaganda tactic by the hopeless Peres to help his Labor Party in this month's Zionist elections.

Aside from open and secret political deals between Washington and Tel Aviv, a quick look at the Zionists' and the Zionist regime's book of crimes since the start of the century reveals that the reality, nature, and foundation of Zionism and the Zionist regime is absolutely rooted in terrorism and crimes against humanity. The great multitude of Palestinian and Lebanese martyrs and refugees of 50 years of Palestine and 14 years of Lebanese occupation by the international [word indistinct] Zionist regime is clear proof of this bitter reality, a reality that has been imposed on the international community in this century by the West as a whole, particularly by the British at first, and now by the United States of America.

Iran: Commentary Views Secretary Christopher's Terrorism Claims

LD0105191196 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 1 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On Tuesday, 30 April, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher issued a report which claims that seven countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria, have sponsored international terrorism in 1995. The report also asserts that the Islamic Republic of Iran supports international terrorism more than other countries and finances grouplets posing a threat to U.S. citizens. Political analysts maintain Washington's motive for accusing Iran and Syria of terrorism could be sought in recent developments in Lebanon.

Following Zionist regime's onslaughts on Lebanon during the past few weeks, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria took widescale efforts to end the aggressions and embarked on activities to preempt Zionist crimes which had endangered the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. On the heels of Iran's, Syrian, and some European countries' efforts, the Zionist occupying regime found no option but to declare a cease-fire and finally, without attaining its premeditated aim, brought an end to its attacks on Lebanon.

At any rate, the U.S. secretary of state's allegations are brought up at a time when the international community is witnessing Iran's humanitarian aids to the Lebanese people, and efforts to put an end to the crisis. Under such circumstances Washington has not only failed to condemn Tel Aviv measures but, by backing up the Zionists, has directly given a green light to the Zionists' savage actions. Up to now, the U.S., through various means, has attempted to isolate the Islamic Republic of Iran. Levelling unfounded allegations against Iran, and charging the Islamic Republic of Iran with terrorism, and striving to develop nuclear weapons are to be viewed in this line.

In a bid to exert further pressure on Iran, the White House has imposed an economic embargo against Iran, facing opposition of its allies, and they have on various occasions warned Washington of any tightening of the embargo against Iran. Political analysts hold U.S. secretary of state's recent measure of releasing a report over countries sponsoring terrorism is a propaganda move aimed at deflecting the world's public opinion from America's faulty performances abroad.

Iran: Spokesman Denies 'Baseless' U.S. Accusations of Terrorism

LD0205181096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The recent tragic events in Lebanon proved that the U.S. State Department supports acts of terrorism, aggression, and massacres committed by the Zionist regime, said Mr. [Mahmud] Mohammadi, spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Reacting to a recent report by the U.S. State Department accusing Iran of supporting terrorism, Mohammadi said the U.S. foreign policy is suffering from contradictions because the United States is standing against a phenomenon [terrorism] which it has supported shamelessly and openly.

He said that the U.S. support for the recent Zionist crimes against the defenseless people of Lebanon proved that U.S. foreign policy supports terrorism. Mr. Mohammadi added that repeating baseless U.S. accusations against Iran cannot make world public opinion forget the negative consequences of [Warren] Christopher's support for the Zionist regime's terrorist acts.

The spokesman also denied claims by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry that Iran has been building underground bases on the shores of the Persian Gulf to hide missiles. He said these statements were simple-minded justifications to sell sophisticated U.S. weapons to the Zionist regime.

He added that the United States opposes Iran's policy for a Middle East free from weapons of mass destruction and is using simple-minded justifications to arm the Zionist regime which follows anti-Arab, anti-Islamic tendencies. He said the reason for the increase in the U.S. anti-Iranian propaganda is the political defeat that both the United States and the Zionist regime have suffered in Lebanon.

He added that the United States lacks a foreign policy that could suit the new conditions of the world and therefore speaks in the language of threats, coercion, and militarism.

Iran: Commentary Rejects U.S. Claims of Missile Sites in Gulf

LD0205143096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] According to AFP, the American Secretary of State William Perry, in an interview with reporters on Wednesday 1 May, claimed that Iran is attempting to threat and intimidate its neighbors in different ways. These words come at a time when one of America's military officials claimed recently that Iran is building underground sites to station missiles on the Persian Gulf coast.

In this line, the American secretary of state referred to the reports of the American sources in this regard, claiming that the above mentioned sites are clearly designed to stationing military equipment, but refused to offer any documents. However, he assessed that Iran activity on the Persian Gulf coast are done to strengthen defense measures by active arms system.

Political experts believe that this not the first time that the White House officials are inspiring some rumors and false news about Iran based on false reports. Because before now the Americans claimed with a lot of propaganda commotion that Iran has carried out military activities in the Iranian islands of the Persian Gulf and endangered the regional security by stationing missiles and chemical armament there. But after the false nature of the Americas' claims were divulged Western news media, as well as political and military circles, took a silence stance and forgot all about the issue.

Since America's old ally, that is the Shah's regime in Iran was toppled, its officials have always alleged Iran of having military activities and threatening the security of its Persian Gulf neighbors. Such propaganda are merely performed by imaging the region as insecure so as to increase America's arms sales. Certainly America's Defense Department and its foreign policy are both moving toward the same objective. On the one hand, the U.S. Defense Department uses the policy of threatening and intimidating the regional countries to justify its arms sales and strengthening America's military presence in the Persian Gulf, on the other hand, the U.S. diplomacy is also trying to legitimize its domination- seeking policy and to impose economic sanctions on the Islamic republic of Iran.

Undoubtedly America's false propaganda failed to justify its domination-seeking policies in the region. These new claims regarding the construction of underground missile sites will also be to no avail.

Iran: Yazdi Warns U.S., Arab States Against Helping Israel

LD0305104396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian 0800 GMT 3 May 96

[Friday sermon prayers by Ayatollah Mohammad 'Ali Yazdi, head of the judiciary branch, in Tehran on 3 May — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The usurper Zionist government carried out bestial attacks against southern Lebanon. We saw that for 15 or 16 days it committed various atrocities. Its ugliest crime was an attack against women, children, and civilians who had taken refuge at a UN-affiliated center. As a result of that attack, many people were killed or injured. The attack created other problems which you yourselves know about.

The Islamic Republic of Iran and its esteemed foreign minister made ceaseless efforts to stop the confrontation and killings in order that Islam and the people's rights should be preserved. We can indeed say that these efforts, together with those of a number of regional or European countries, fortunately came to fruition and Hizballah's main right of defending its territory and religion and confronting the aggressor was preserved. It will continue its struggles until the usurper government has evacuated the Lebanese territory it has occupied. [crowd chants slogans]

The defeat and disgrace of Israel was clear to the whole world, and it was also a defeat for America, so attempts were made to cover it up. I believe that two traitors, Mr. Peres and Mr. 'Arafat, went to the United States and signed a number of contracts in order to cover up their previous atrocities. One of them begged for and received some help, but the other received a little more than help and signed an agreement. It was the kind of agreement which, when one hears about it, makes one wonder how a government as angry as America was supposed to be could make such a decision or statement, in defiance of the whole world.

They ignore the whole world. They think that no one hears what they are saying. They say what they like. They think, for example, that they can violate the rights of people by setting up terrorist groups, delivering more advanced equipment, more cash, more secret and satellite information, and by having security cooperation. Indeed, America and Israel and all those who support them, including some Arab countries and those whose ideology this is, should know that the day has passed when one could trample upon the rights of people using the logic of force, the logic of weapons, and the logic of the jungle. That day has ended, and such desires should be thrown in the trash can.

I wish to conclude these sermons by raising one last point: the Court in the Hague must not fail to try the Serb war criminals. The entire world has admitted that one of these men committed the worst crimes during the war. He has been summoned by the court. The gentlemen in charge of the court must not let him go. It would not be acceptable if these gentlemen were to neglect the case and prepare some vague and irrelevant answers to justify their negligence. They could say, for instance, that it would be an onerous task to try him at the moment, or that he cannot be traced and handed over to the court, etc. The court could make excuses which would delay the trial until his crime is forgotten, and later some states might even award him a medal or a prize. By resorting to such delaying tactics, they could even erase the crime and exonerate the criminal.

The issue of war crimes is different from that of the war itself. War crimes can be investigated. This court is duty bound to preserve justice at the international level.

May God's peace and mercy be upon you all.

Iran: Paper Urges Use of Movies To Show Palestinians' Plight

LD0105141896 Tehran SALAM in Persian 28 Apr 96 p7

[Unattributed commentary: "Seize the Opportunity"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] No doubt you have heard that the major world powers have often exploited the art of film-making and cinema in order to influence public opinion. The Zionists have been highly successful in this field and have attracted much sympathy.

A glance at the history of film-making shows that the dream factory of Hollywood has produced hundreds of interesting films on the atrocities of World War II. Most of the films on the subject totally exaggerate the tyranny against the Jews during the war years. What is the point of magnifying the issue of several concentration camps, built over 50 years ago, with ovens for burning human beings? The objective is to make the people of the world feel sorry for the usurping Zionists and to ignore their modern-day hideous crimes in the Middle East.

The latest example of the Zionists' calculated move was a film named "Schindler's List". Several years ago, this film won a number of Oscar prizes and made huge profits by attracting large audiences in various regions of the world. It again refreshed the memory of atrocities committed by Nazism against the Jews, whereas today all the influential mass media of the world are easily overlooking the Zionist regime's attacks on civilian targets in Lebanon.

Last year, the Iranian cinema produced an interesting film on the plight of the Palestinian people. The film, named "Left Stranded" (made by Seyfollah Dad), is particularly worth watching because it studied the humanitarian aspect of the issue and not its political dimensions. [passage omitted]

Global Zionism today controls the cinema as a powerful tool. The committed film-makers of the world are not given the opportunity to compete in this field. Why is our country, as the proclaimer of the Palestinian nation's rights and as a supporter of the oppressed people in the southern region of Lebanon, not exploiting this important tool?

Unfortunately, most of the films produced in Iran in previous years are not of sufficient quality to compete in the international market. But the film made on the plight of the Palestinian people can be shown in the world market, and negligence cannot be justified. In this respect, the following recommendations are made for the benefit of the officials in charge of the country's cinema:

One: Arabic speaking actors and actresses have played roles in the film "Left Stranded" and it includes scenes of historical buildings in an Arab country. It can, therefore, be shown in Arabic-speaking countries.

Two: The Iranian Government should subsidize the said film to be shown in the cinemas of other Islamic countries. It is obvious the people of these countries sympathize with the Palestinians and reject the legitimacy of the usurping Zionist government. They will, therefore, welcome this film, thanks to the recent atrocities of the Israeli Government in Lebanon.

Three: The Iranian nation is also ready to welcome this film in the country's cinemas. Showing this film on the screens will demonstrate our sympathy with the aggrieved people of Lebanon and will further turn our people against the usurpers of Palestine.

Iran: Paper Notes Futility of Israeli Raids on Lebanese Hizballah

LD0105180796 Tehran IRAN in Persian 28 Apr 96 p1

[Article from column of "First Chapter" entitled: "Why War, Why Cease-Fire?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Following 16 days of heavy shelling against Lebanon and its people, a cease-fire has been established and guns have been silenced with the mediation of various countries, including Iran, Syria, and France.

Not only did this all-out war not bear any fruits for the Zionist regime, but it added a chapter in the records of the "war criminals."

This time, too, the resistance by the people of Lebanon has showed that it enjoys such strength and efficiency that air, naval, and ground attacks by the occupied regime are unable to inflict any effective blow on its capability.

Although with an unprecedented bombardment of the defenseless people of Lebanon, the Zionists destroyed the homes, agricultural land, roads, and the infrastructure of the Lebanese people, the firm bases of the Islamic resistance continued to defend themselves to the last and the sounds of the fire of defensive missiles from South Lebanon continued to roar.

The Israelis had no option but to admit the uselessness of their comprehensive offensives against the people of Lebanon, to accept the results of diplomatic efforts, and to hide behind the Americans' apron.

Therefore, 600 air raids and 25,000 rounds of artillery shelling by Israel against the residential areas in Lebanon, which martyred 164 people and wounded 400, and which made hundreds of thousands of people homeless, did not bring the least military gain for the Zionists.

Hizballah, the symbol of resistance of the people of Lebanon and an armed wing of the oppressed of the south, has emerged as a successful and victorious force, and has imposed its conditions on the occupying government with the support of the mediating countries.

By maintaining the lawful right of self-defense against the aggression of the occupiers, the Islamic resistance has proved the uselessness of Israel's effort in bombarding residential areas and showed that the resistance is permanent.

Therefore, we can call the result of the Zionists' offensives on Lebanon a desperate and shameful defeat for Peres and his depressed allies, and an "optimistic victory" for the Islamic resistance and Muslims.

Iran: Israel Must Answer for 'Crimes' in Lebanon

LD0105214896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 28 Apr 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "The case of Israel's crimes is still open"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Sixteen days of bestial aggression by the Zionist army [against Lebanon] have ended without achieving any of the Tel Aviv regime's objectives. By accepting the cease-fire, Israel in fact endorsed its own defeat. Therefore, the first objective of the enemy — the suppression of Hizballah and ending of retaliatory attacks by the Islamic Resistance in south Lebanon — faced total defeat, and the Zionists failed to suppress the resistance movement in the south.

Despite that, post cease-fire developments have been somewhat unpredictable. Those media and forums which preferred to keep silent or supported the Zionists, are today engaging in an odd political-propaganda maneuver. They are reporting the Israeli defeat even more extensively than Hizballah, the Islamic resistance forces in southern Lebanon, and the people of Lebanon are doing. By doing that, they intend to create a feeling of satisfaction among the people of Lebanon and the Islamic resistance forces of Lebanon that Israel has been defeated completely. The aim of this Zionist propaganda maneuver is to cover up the two-week-long atrocities committed by Israel, and thus divert the public opinion away from the need to punish the aggressor, and even the need [for the Israeli forces] to evacuate southern Lebanon. [passage omitted]

But the file of the Israeli atrocities should not be allowed to be closed. Israeli crimes have ended temporarily, but this does not mean that the case of the Zionist crimes should be closed. The case of Israeli atrocities is still open and the Zionists, as perpetrators, should answer for extensive human and financial crimes they have committed. [passage omitted]

Iran: Hizballah Leader Comments on Israeli Aggression, Cease-Fire

LD0205100296 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 28 Apr 96 pp 1, 3

[Interview with Sayyid Hasan Nasrullah, leader of Hizballah, by unidentified KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL correspondent in Damascus, date not given — "Hizballah's Nasrullah: Endurance Is a Permanent Feature of Our Struggle"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Israel launched its recent aggression with the aim of destroying Hizballah. Did it achieve its goal?

[Nasrullah] Not at all. The Zionist enemy couldn't achieve its goal. All aerial bombardments which the Israelis said were launched against Hizballah bases and centres and led to martyrdom of the Hizballah mojahedin is simply not true. This proves the fact that Hizballah has penetrated deeply among the people.

After 14 days of non-stop Zionist aggression, I can say with confidence that Zionist hostility has not inflicted any blow on Hizballah of its military resistance.

[Correspondent] What's your assessment of the U.S. proposed cease-fire plan?

[Nasrullah] The Americans, since the outset of the latest aggression, floated something called an "initiative". It was indeed nothing but an effort to impose Israel's demands on Lebanon. It was basically intended to take political advantage from Zionists' military acts, and we announced our opposition to the proposed plan from the first moment. It was a biased plan and gave the Israelis the right to kill and massacre our people and ignored our right to resist.

The Americans want to interfere in all regional affairs and show great sensitivity to other's stances. This was observed in the U.S. position vis-a-vis the initiatives taken by France, Russia and Europe.

With the potentials at our disposal, we will resist and retaliate appropriately. The most important criteria of our resistance is to endure. The most effective reply to the enemy's aggression is to continue our resistance without taking a step back.

[Correspondent] What are Hizballah's conditions for a truce?

[Nasrullah] We have often repeated that with respect to the cease-fire what concerns us is an end to firing Katyashas on the north of Palestine. But it doesn't mean that we will stop our operations and resistance will continue as long as Zionist occupiers are present in south Lebanon. Resistance is our right and as far as our rights are concerned we will act accordingly.

[Correspondent] When Hizballah launches a brave attack or acts, all eyes turn to Iran. What's your comment?

[Nasrullah] In all my press interviews, especially with Western reporters and representatives of the international media, I have underlined that resistance in Lebanon is independent and arises from our will and determination. Our operations against occupiers is a duty which we shoulder.

The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the Lebanese people's right to defend and resist against Israel as the USA backs Israel in its aggression against the region and nations. The Islamic Republic of course supports the Lebanese people's resistance on the basis of its Islamic and humanitarian stance.

In fact, this is something Islamic Iran can take pride in. It is besides nations and their honorable resistance and not besides the Zionist criminals.

[Correspondent] Western propaganda circles negatively reflected the supreme leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khamene'i's, message to you.

Now that the leader of Muslims, of Marja' [Marja'-e Taqlid, source of emulation] has addressed the Lebanese nation and those of the region and asked them to resist, it is a natural and historic issue. Is this a duty of the religious leadership or the religious ulema?

[Nasrullah] I explicitly say that we don't fear Western allegations nor does Ayatollah Khamene'i. He did not send his message secretly but he gave it to the wire services.

[Correspondent] How would you characterize Israel's simultaneous onslaught against the Lebanese nation and Hizballah?

[Nasrullah] With the potentials at our disposal, we will resist and retaliate appropriately. The most important criteria of our resistance is to endure. The most effective reply to the enemy's aggression is to continue our resistance without taking a step back.

[Correspondent] It is said that Israel has ensured the Arab regime's silence vis-a-vis its aggressions.

[Nasrullah] This of course, is not true because a resolution by the Arab League was a good one and we had not seen such a stand in previous years.

Furthermore a meeting of foreign ministers, whose countries attended the Sharm al-Shaykh Conference which was to be held in Luxembourg was postponed.

I think what is unfolding in Lebanon has put the Arab regimes at bay, although some of them have been disgraced. Events in Lebanon have cast them against their own peoples who have been enraged by these (Zionist) crimes.

It may be asked why these nations did not put their governments under pressure in the past. It should be mentioned that the difference this time is that major aggressions, massacre of innocent civilians and tragic scenes have been broadcast on television.

Under such circumstances, governments can't do anything, nor can they ignore public opinion. On the other hand, we were informed by Mr Velayati (Iran's foreign minister) that some efforts by Islamic countries are underway to make the Organization of the Islamic Conference much more active and adopt a stance deserving an international body. But so far efforts by Islamic countries and Arab states have not borne fruit.

[Correspondent] How do you view comments to the effect that Israel miscalculated its attack on Lebanon?

[Nasrullah] They have talked of practical and technical errors, Israel's military intelligence has made a blunder in assessment of Hizballah's capabilities, the number of our Katyushas and technical potentialities, and ultimately about Hizballah's ability to continue firing rockets on the northern flank of the occupied territories in Palestine.

It is obvious that they make mistakes in their assessments because they depend on informants and paid agents in other organizations. But we can claim that our resistance is free from such penetrations and the Zionists have not been able to permeate our movement.

Moreover, they also made a mistake in dealing with Islamic liberation fighters. The Zionists think that threats, aerial bombardments and shellings and intimidation will stop the fighters from continuing their path. All these efforts are futile. The Zionists are well aware that they are fighting a group which believes in God and seeks martyrdom, has no attachment to the world and is ready for death. They are followers of Imam Ali (A.S.) [May peace be upon him] who loved death as a baby loves his mother's breast.

Iran: Commentary Views Lebanese Cease-Fire, Israeli Aggression

LD0205190496 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 27 Apr 96 p 16

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The cease-fire agreement was announced on the television while the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher stood next to the Zionist regime's Prime Minster Shim'on Peres in Tel Aviv, and the French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette stood beside the Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri in Beirut. The leader of Lebanon's Hizballah, Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, described the terms of the cease-fire agreement as useful because it stopped the Zionist regime's aggression against Lebanon and the killing of innocent people.

There are no experts in Middle Eastern or Lebanese affairs who would see this cease-fire as an end to the war and to the Zionist regime's attacks. So long as the differences between Syria and Israel are not resolved, and the issues such as the withdrawal of the aggressive regime's forces from the Golan Heights and Lebanese territory — 15 percent of which is under its occupation — are not solved, one cannot pin hope on the continuation of the cease-fire.

Following the signing of the Oslo agreement, the Zionist regime has openly displayed two characteristics. Firstly, it has chosen the American government to represent it in the resolution of all Middle Eastern problems, and it has disregarded UN resolutions by being indifferent towards UN decisions and by relying on the power and influence of the White House. Secondly, it has displayed its military power for the complete consolidation of the "Zionist hegemony" in the Middle East, and threatened with American-supported military attacks to carry out new plans similar to the Oslo agreement. Both of these characteristics are in line with the current U.S. policy. [passage omitted]

Iran: Editorial Sees Strengthening of Lebanese Hizballah

LD0205091196 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 28 Apr 96 p 2

[Yousef G. Gharavi "Viewpoint" article: "Hizballah Emerge Stronger"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Finally the so-called "Operation Grapes of Wrath" which saw the massive military onslaught by Zionist forces, leaving behind a trail of tragic scenes in Lebanon, has come to a halt after sixteen days of continuous bombardment of the already war-torn Lebanon.

The primary question which comes to mind is what has Israel, except for showing more of its barbaric and inhuman face, gained from its military adventure on Lebanese soil?

The Zionist onslaught, no doubt, has had several wide impacts as far as the Lebanese people and their legitimate resistance against Israeli occupation of the south, is concerned.

First of all, the national solidarity between the Hizballah on the one hand and the people of Lebanon - irrespective of their religious sentiments - on the other, which was the main target of Israeli operations, not only remain intact, but have further strengthened and consolidated.

The gulf which the Zionists wanted to create between the people and the Hizballah, never occurred. This point is worth taking note of given the Zionist calculations of their military blitz in Lebanon.

Secondly, the pressure brought by Israel to force Lebanon to abandon its common position with Syria regarding the so-called peace process and also to isolate Damascus in the Arab world, proved to be futile. In the past too, such plans on the part of Tel Aviv were not completely shelved. The wholesale intimidation policy of Israel against Lebanon, however, failed to create a divide between the two Arab nations.

Thirdly, the horrific atrocities and ugly offenses committed by the Zionists during their assault has prompted public opinion in the region as well as at the international level to strongly condemn the slaughter of the innocent people in South Lebanon. This was done despite the Zionist-backed media's attempts to ignore human suffering.

Apart from the Lebanese events, it would be worth while to mention 'Arafat's recent endeavour to drop all clauses in the PLO charter calling for the destruction of the Zionist entity.

No doubt, 'Arafat's move comes at the most inappropriate time. Unfortunately, 'Arafat with his action has presented a reward to the Zionist killers for keeping up their odious acts of massacring the defenceless people of Lebanon. For the sake of decency at least, 'Arafat should have postponed the Palestine National Council session, till after the cease-fire was reached. So that he could have claimed he did his best to avoid the spilling of his Arab brethren's blood in the hands of Zionists and thus, spared his own hide.

Iran: Daily Accuses 'Arafat of 'Signing Away' Motherland

LD0205142596 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 28 Apr 96 p 8

[Article by Najafi: "Signing Away his motherland!"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] I was wondering as to why PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat had selected the wrong time for holding a session of the 600-member Palestine National Council, particularly when the Zionist regime in Occupied Palestine was ruthlessly massacring defenseless Lebanese people, when my chain of thought was disturbed by my friend Jamsheed, nicknamed Jimmy because of his naivety, who dropped in.

"I have brought some good reading material for you", he said and put on my desk KYODO NEWS (Weekly from Japan Newsletter) dated March 29, 1996.

"What is it about?" I asked him.

"You read this", he said pointing to a text title: Ota Rejects Court Order to Sign Land Lease Contracts for Bases.

The news was about Okinawa Governor Masahide Ota rejecting a court order to sign documents needed to oblige local landowners to lease their land to the US military.

Ota refused to sign lease contracts for a total of 35,000 square meters of land owned by 35 residents because the owners and other citizens of Okinawa did not want US military bases to remain in their city.

The people of Okinawa are full of disgust for the US servicemen's immoral and rowdy behaviour, and their hatred of the American soldiers reached a climax following the rape of a local 12-year old schoolgirl by three US servicemen last September.

After reading the text, I commented; "Yes. One has to admire the Japanese official for his selflessness and courage. I agree with you, Jimmy, that Ota has demonstrated dignity and boldness. It is really admirable".

"Hats off to Masahide Ota. Three cheers to him", shouted Jimmy joyfully and asked, "By the way, what did you want to write about 'Arafat?"

Remembering that 'Arafat unhesitantly signed away his motherland a couple of years ago and now is endeavouring to remove a clause that calls for the destruction of the Zionist state on Palestinian soil from the PLO's charter, I looked blankly at Jimmy for a while and said: "Nothing".

Iran: Iran-Syria Cooperation Said Behind Hizballah's Success

LD0205175396 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 16

[Political commentary: "Lebanon's real protectors"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After 16 days of Zionist offensives against Lebanon, yesterday a cease-fire was established in that country. The current cease-fire is a written version of a verbal agreement reached in Tir 1372 [22 June - 22 July, 1993] but contains more details. The recent agreement was relatively in line with Hizballah's latest statement, and contrary to the act played by [Shim'on] Peres and [Warren] Christopher in their news conference after the establishment of a cease-fire, the supporters of aggression didn't benefit. And Lebanon and Muslims in the region also recognized their supporters and their real enemies.

1. Proof of Hizballah's righteousness: After 16 days of defense and retaliatory attacks, the real heroes of this unequal war were the resistance forces. The Katyusha missiles, which were targeting northern regions of the occupied Palestine, were not less effective than the Zionists' artillery fire. Over 200,000 Jewish inhabitants of northern Palestine became homeless and the rest took refuge in shelters. [passage omitted]

The glory attained by Hizballah has been unprecedented in the history of Arab governments which make enormous investments in purchasing armaments. The recent situation has further strengthened the spiritual relationship between the people, government, and Hizballah of Lebanon.

2. Although the Islamic and Arab World and even those who accepted the compromise with Tel Aviv condemned the recent Zionist offensives, the Iranians and Syrians joined hands in action and in deed to support the rights of the people of Lebanon, and the resistance's right for struggle was officially recognized. The 10-month naval siege of Lebanon's coast ended and helped to prevent the Zionist regime and its puppets from attacking Lebanon.

In future, those Islamic governments and nations, who may become the target of the Zionist's regime expansionism, will enjoy strong support as a result of cooperation between Iran and Syria. Those countries which have similar stances like Tehran and Damascus can join this spectrum and end the unholy process of total compromise with Tel Aviv.

3. Once again the true enemies of stability in the region have become known. The United States and the Zionist regime, who are one of the main pillars of the compromise talks and are the designers and executers of the Middle East compromise process, have disguised the power of their arms under the shadow of the "Olive Branch For Peace." Assassination and internal suppression in Palestine and offensives against Lebanon make the fact clear.

On the eve of its elections, due in the summer, Tel Aviv is trampling over the basic rights of human beings in order to attract the trust of Jewish nationalists. Washington showed too that supporting its regional pawn justifies clear violations of international laws as self-defense! The White House benefits from the process of compromise and is not the mediator. Any kind of rights for Muslims to defend themselves is interpreted as terrorism. While this fake right has been given to the Zionist regime to trample over the rights of others in order to achieve political aims within its own country and increase its bargaining power in its defeated diplomacy.

Iran: Tehran, PRC Agree on Joint Cooperation in Mines, Metals

LD0105203896 Tehran IRNA in English 1952 GMT 1 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 1, IRNA — Mines and Metals Minister Hoseyn Mahluji and his Chinese counterpart Wu Jiam Ching inked accords here Wednesday [1 May] for the production of concentrated copper at Sangin through buyback.

The two parties, besides reaching different agreements on implementation of joint projects in various fields concerning mineral and metal industries, have endorsed an agreement for implementation of copper melting projects at Khatunabad (Kerman) and Ferro Molybdenum in Qeshm Island. The two sides underlined the need for the consolidation and expansion of Tehran-Beijing economic ties.

Public relations department at Mines and Metals Ministry said here Wednesday that both Jiam Ching and Mahluji stressed on the need for expediting the implementation of a graffiti electrode project in Qeshm, the construction of a ferro chrome plant in Bandar-e 'Abbas (Hormuzgan) and Baft (Kerman) and close cooperation in electrode pit plant project.

Mahluji indicated that the expansion of ties with China was a prominent feature of Iran's foreign policy, adding that his ministry looked forward to promoting yet closer relations with Chinese mines and metals ministry. The metal and mine minister pointed out that since China has abundant possibilities in the area of enforcement of different projects and potentials in the field of metals processing, cooperation between two countries faced no limits.

Jiam Ching in return stated that his government was willing to assume key role in implementing and completing national projects in Iran in the area of metals industry.

The Chinese metal ministry concluded by saying that Iran and China could expect close cooperatation in the transfer of technology in the area of metal and mineral industries' in addition to working closely in metal market.

Iran: Third World Press Needed To Counteract Western Propaganda

LD0205202396 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 2

[Commentary by Seyyed Mostafa Kazemipur; "Western propaganda and the press in the Third World and Iran"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Our press, which is the messenger of the spiritual values of the revolution, has always moved toward the enlightenment of the public opinion. In the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran the press has always stood as a powerful dam against the destructive waves of western propaganda and has never allowed a doubt in itself. At this age of free information, which is led by the United States, information is selected according to U.S. requirements and injected into the Third World. However, Iran has used unifying policies in the region and the Third World; has followed regional policies for self-sufficiency and respect for national customs and behavior; and has attracted the attention of the Third World countries to this bitter fact that the western world has always tried to numb nations through its powerful information agencies. Today, it is impossible to remain free from the superpowers of information until regional press and media are created. In the past few years, Iran has began extensive efforts in the region so that the region's television networks and news agencies will be able to provide, through a unified regional system, for the people's need for information and news and to guard people from the poisoned western propaganda.

Iran: Nateq-Nuri Hails Press as 'Powerful Arm of the System'

LD0205204296 Tehran IRNA in English 2016 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 2, IRNA — Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, addressing a gathering of journalists here on Thursday, described the country's press as a "powerful arm of the system" and called on it to be more sensitive towards international issues especially to those dealing with the Zionist media in its propaganda against Islamic Iran.

Nateq-Nuri, warning that the Zinists by infilrating the western and American news agencies have spared no effort in distorting news about Iran, said the mission of the Iranian press was to confront these plots and to stifle the Zionist voice.

He said the Iranian press should also help build public awareness and cultural progress in order to counter the political, economic and cultural domination of global arrogance which tries to keep people in ignorance with an objective to tighten its tentacles on world nations.

Iran: Writer Objects to TV Satire

LD0205190596 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 27 Apr p 6

[Article by Roya Sadr; "Where's the rush? — reflections on the new wave of satire in the radio and television]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have been witnessing a new wave of satire on the radio and television for a number of years now. Protected by the miraculous expansion of radio and television, this new wave of satire has been growing very fast and seems to be going as high as the sky. [passage omitted]

A significant part of the satire on television — particularly the parts which have modernist tendencies and which are aimed at a young audience — are incredibly grotesque and saturated with sick and masochistic behavior. Not only do they fail to make the viewer smile, they darken his spirit and offend him. Showing violence, crushed skulls, the use of knives and close ups of dead bodies are a part of television satire today. Such things can only bring a feeling of happiness and fun to the sick mind. [passage omitted]

In one word, the satire on the television today — despite all the expenditure — is not satire. It is not even comedy. It is worthless. In this age, when pressures of life are overpowering and a burden on the spirit, it is not unrealistic for the viewer to expect to see the good life, some hope, and a brighter future in the television programs.

Iran: Over 2 Million Refugees Remain in Iran

LD0105182796 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 28 Apr 96 P 2

["Iran is hosting highest number of foreign refugees in the world"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Esfahan, IRNA: The adviser to the interior minister and managing director of foreign citizens and immigrants' affairs, [Ahmad Hoseyni], said: Hosting two million and fifty thousand immigrants and refugees, the Islamic Republic of Iran heads the list of countries accepting immigrants and refugees.

Ahmad Hoseyni yesterday in Esfahan said: These immigrants, are 1,400,000 Afghans, 500,000 Iraqis, and the rest mainly from Bangladesh and Pakistan who have entered Iran in recent years.

He added: The current policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is aimed at limiting the number of new refugees it accepts and returning the existing refugees to their homes voluntarily.

He said: Following such a policy, thus far 1,300,000 Afghan refugees have returned to their own country.

Hoseyni added: Due to the current internal situation in Iraq, Iraqi refugees have not been able to return in vast numbers, but around 400,000 have so far returned home through the northern regions of Iraq. [passage omitted]

Iran: Paper Reports on Increase in Power Station Capacity

LD0105193496 Tehran SALAM in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 2

[Report from the domestic news desk: "The Capacity of the Country's Power Stations Will Increase by 1,800 MW This Year"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The production of energy in the country's power stations increased by 1,500 MW last year, bringing the total production level to 22,000 MW. Another 1,800 MW of energy will be added to the country's capacity this year.

This news was mentioned by Engineer Mohammad Mallaki, the deputy energy minister for electricity affairs and managing director of TAVANIR [Iran Power Generation and Transmission Company], at a news conference yesterday. [passage omitted]

The deputy energy minister said: A sum of 200 billion rials was invested in the country's electricity industry last year. He expressed the hope that another 280 billion rials would be invested in this field during the current year. [passage omitted]

Iran: New Morning Pashto Program To Begin 7 May

LD0205180496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto at 1230 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed listeners, before announcing the details of today's program, we bring you the good news that we will broadcast a morning program starting from 7 May.

This program will be broadcast on the following frequencies: Medium wave 31 meters, corresponding to 9557 kHz; and on 49 meters, corresponding to 6005 kHz. The program will be broadcast from 0700 to 0800 Iranian and Afghan time [0230-0330 GMT], corresponding to 0730 to 0830 Pakistan time.

Iran: Writer Criticizes Level of Management in Iran

LD0205230396 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 4

[Article by Dr. Habib Chini from the Economic Note column: "Improving the Structure of Executive Management"

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The conference on management of human resources, whose setting up and inauguration were reported by ABRAR, offers a good opportunity for a frank discussion on human resources management in our country. [passage omitted]

Management in our country is once again acquiring the aura of luxury. Many managers, by setting up vast establishments, employing personal and corporate commissionaires and doormen, have strayed from the methods which should be the model for managers in an Islamic country. One is apprehensive that the method may become so prevalent that ordinary people lose all access to managers in the country. Nowadays, if you visit the office of any minister or deputy minister — that is, if you are lucky to be able to do that — you will see an unbelievable level of luxury.

In the state annual budget, the Fourth Majles endeavored to eliminate luxury expenses from the ministry and government organization budgets, but in practice the same expenses are made under the guise of requirements and nonluxury expense. There is absolutely no standard or supervision regarding the dimensions and the decorations of the offices of ministers, deputy ministers, general managers, managers or public servants. In certain far-flung corners of the country employees lack the necessary equipment to keep them warm or cool in the cold and hot seasons while at centers working offices are more luxurious than "suites" in the world's most famous hotels. The spirit of having vast offices carpeted with opulent handwoven carpets is rife in all departments and is expanding. In many government departments many hours are spent arguing over enlarging and refurbishing offices with luxury furniture without regard to the tasks in hand or the tasks deferred.

There are managers who are engaged in the duty of eliminating luxury but have the most luxurious offices themselves. Such managers exist at various echelons and their rivalry in spending the public money has created an offensive situation. This is not out of spite. The issue is that such propensity for luxury, and that by executive managers of the country and through spending the public money, is corrupting and the corruption is expanding. [passage omitted]

So far the discussion was about extravagance and its ensuing corruption. But the essential issue is the reconstruction of administrative structure aimed at increasing efficiency and turning this colossal state organ into a useful tool for economic, social and cultural development.

In a recent study carried out for the United Nations on hours of useful work done by employees in various countries for Iran's administrative system the figure 48 minutes was given. That is when the figure given for Japan was 7 1/2 hours out of eight. It may be that the figure for Iran is somewhat better than that stated in the study but what lies within that point is the unfair distribution of work. That is because in any case some of the work must be done and is being done. While some employees go to work for many years without doing the least amount of work there are handfuls of people who are crushed under too much work. [passage omitted]

The hardship redoubles when several impose their management on an individual whereas sound management requires taking orders from and being responsible to one person. [passage omitted]

In office meetings all eyes and ears are focused on the person who is recognized to be a hard worker so that as soon as he/she moves a proposal they can applaud it and say that there is no one better than he himself/she herself to undertake the task. That is why clever people keep quiet in such meetings as far as possible. They only give their support when someone else has been burdened with the responsibility for the task. In that manner the tasks that must be carried out are done by a few and a great many have a good time on the back of those hard workers.

Such palming off of work is far less indulged in the labor system in factories and in technical tasks. Also it is less prevalent where members of public are involved.

The management structure in our country in this age of development is in need of radical review; is in need of assessment of requirements, job evaluation, division of labor, rational execution of work, timing, appointing of competent executors who can allocate work fairly, providing basic necessities for employees, allocating benefits according to the task performed and securing the future of employees and their families. Each of these requires separate investigation which we will undertake at a better opportunity.

Iran: Shortage of Goods Prelude to High Prices

LD0205090296 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 28 Apr 96 p 9

[FBIS Translated Text] Over the years the people have learned that shortage of commodities will lead to price rises. It does not matter what the commodity is; it could be paper or iron-bars and the shortage could be real or artificial. The people are also familiar with the name, the Consumer Support Organization. But what they see from this vast organization, is its seal on the commodity price labels, approving every new price rise.

The state penal code to combat the price rises was introduced late, but performed well! Since its introduction over a year ago, a number of commodities have been added to or removed from the list of essential goods. That is, any distributor or retailer found guilty of increasing the price of essential goods, should be prosecuted and punished in accordance with the state penal code. As a result, when the name of a commodity is added to the list, that commodity becomes scarce, and as soon as it is taken off the list, it appears in plenty, but at a much higher price. As an example let us see what happened to the poultry meat distribution and prices in Mashhad:

Last year, faced with the fluctuating price of the poultry meat in Mashhad, the esteemed officials in charge of implementing the state penal code in the city added this commodity to the list of essential goods. However, when the market experienced shortage of poultry meat, no official explained the reason to the people. Several days ago, poultry meat became plentiful in all food stores, but the price had risen by 50 percent. Apparently, the responsible officials of the state penal code have announced that poultry is no longer in their list of essential goods. There is no sign of the Consumer Support Organization either. Meanwhile, the people are asking themselves, what can justify the poultry price rise of 1,800 rials per kilo?

Iran: SALAM Readers Cite Election Misdeeds

NC0205110396 Tehran SALAM in Persian 23 Apr 96 p 9

[From the "Listeners' Letters" Column—ellipses as published]

[FBIS Translated Text] A letter that we received on electioneering in Mashhad, signed by some Mashhad students, states:

A large number of people in Mashhad voted for a young student named...[as published] who was born in 1344 [year beginning 21 March 1965] in one of the southernmost parts of Khorasan province. He is a writer and journalist who contributes to the TUS and KHAVARAN newspapers, while also studying law. He carried out his electioneering campaign with minimal expense compared to the other candidates, spending only 600,000 tumans and not taking any loans or assistance, and distanced himself from factional and policy disputes.

The letter continues: According to investigations from every part of the city, the northernmost to the southernmost districts, the people favored him and displayed his posters on their automobiles and offices. The fact is that his posters, bio-data, and viewpoints had the effect of alchemy, and according to some, they participated in the elections simply to vote for him.

In any case the elections took place and, according to information from some very reliable sources, he received a large number of single votes, which in itself indicates his popularity. The night after the election he—who was not affiliated to any group or faction—was informed that he had been disqualified and should announce that he had withdrawn from the elections, so that there would be no outcry.

He questioned how it was possible that his name had been approved prior to the beginning of the canvassing period and he had been granted permission to carry out his campaign, and now he was being disqualified. He was told that apparently his name had been announced by the Guardians' Council in oversight and mistakenly sent to the interior ministry. The latter, also by mistake, sent his name to the Mashhad governorate. They said he had been disqualified right from the outset and, therefore, he should announce that he is withdrawing personally. It is interesting that the reasons for rejecting his credentials have not been specified.

Another letter by Ahmad Mofidi expresses satisfaction at SALAM's criticism of the cancellation of Esfahan elections and writes:

When the people's nominee in Esfahan was rejected, even though he was the choice of the people, and then his spouse received an unprecedented number of votes and was elected to the Majles, but the elections were declared null and void—where is the need for participation by the people?

In answer, we can state once again that this further emphasizes the need for the people's participation. If in the interim elections, the people of Esfahan vote at the same level, naturally, others will be forced to bow down to the will of the people.

An esteemed reader from Kheyrabad-e 'Olya in Gachsaran district expressed his pleasure at SALAM's criticism of the discrepancies in the constituency, such as the rejection of the candidates favored by the people and certain actions in the course of the elections. He raised two questions: The first question is the reason the Tehran Militant Clerics Society [TMCS] did not nominate a candidate and the other is the reason for former Prime Minister Mir Husayn Musavi's withdrawal from the political scene.

Regarding the first question, clarifications and answers have been published in SALAM earlier, to which he can refer. (However, a new response would be the attitude toward the Servants of Construction group—who constitute a majority faction at present— insinuating that they are outside the fold of Islam and a great danger! Naturally, this clarifies why the TMCS did not present any list of candidates.)

As for the second question, whether or not Mir Husayn Musavi intends to run for president, we have no information.

A collective letter was received from Baft residents mentioning actions, such as rice being distributed on election night by...a candidate from the majority faction in the fifth round of the Majles elections, and other cases. It posed the question: If officials annulled the Esfahan elections for the reasons that were announced, why were the Baft elections not annulled for the same reasons, especially since infractions were more evident in the small district of Baft than in Esfahan? [No SALAM response given]

Hoseyn Nazar-Sha'ar of Karaj: We received your letter criticizing remarks by the Friday imam regarding the change in electoral laws. It would be appropriate if criticism is balanced and based on the correct reasoning. If one official's views are incorrect there is no reason to use an inappropriate tone.

F. Farzin: Your letter reached us. Your analysis of the United States and the Zionist regime and information that we should not combat them is wrong. We hope you will view the issue in a more just and realistic manner.

A letter signed by various basijis, members of the martyrs' families, war veterans, and disabled from the eight-year [Iran-Iraq] war, addressed to the Guardians Council, has reached us. We cannot print it for legal reasons and we hope it will be addressed through a legal procedure.

[An unsigned letter reads] Esteemed dear brothers at SALAM, salutations:

We hope you are fine. We have often written to you, and this will not be my last letter. Each time you merely write: Your letter reached us. Why would it not reach you? At least every week you should present a synopsis of the letters received. But apparently there is no end to the saga of influence gained by the rightist faction.

As an Iranian Muslim who attaches importance to his fate and that of millions of his compatriots and has no wish, but the honor, pride, and prosperity of his country, I have called on everyone to participate in the elections. For hours I debated with opponents and convinced many individuals to participate in the polls. Finally the elections took place and the noble people of Esfahan voted. When I heard that the Esfahan elections had been declared null and void I felt that the world around me had virtually collapsed.

I was inundated by telephone calls and protests by people who had voted at my behest. I swear to God, I could not answer them. What is the sin of the people of Esfahan? Why are... and ... [names not given] rejected? The crime of the people of Esfahan is that they voted for the spouse of someone whose credentials had been rejected by the Guardians Council. The people of Esfahan are now being penalized for their political acumen and awareness.

The reasons for canceling out the elections in Esfahan were flimsy: playing counter-revolutionary music at the electoral headquarters! dinner at hotels! How many people—of the 500,000 who voted—can be invited to dinner at seven on election night? If ... [no name given] had won, would the elections have been canceled? Do the people of Esfahan have any intelligence that they would be deceived by the banners of a few? [unsigned]

Shahram Darvish writes from Mahshahr explaining the reasons for the defeat of some candidates, since they were "reformists," and describes the voter turnout in this constituency as dazzling. We apologize to this reader for not including his letter; it is too long.

Iran: Ansar-e Hezbollah Complains About Servants of Construction

LD0105162596 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 28 Apr 96 p2

["Ansar-e Hezbollah sues Servants of Construction"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ansar-e Hezbollah has presented a petition to the Islamic Republic of Iran News Agency in which they ask Tehran's Justice Department to investigate a statement issued on 17 April 1996 by the Group of Servants of Construction.

IRNA reports that in the petition reference is made to the resignation of a number of candidates from the list of the Group of Servants of Construction. The Servants of Construction's statement against the candidates is described as insulting and Ansar-e Hezbollah calls for an investigation.

Iran: Imam's Line, Servants of Construction To Possibly Cooperate

LD0205181496 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 28 April 96 p 2

["Majles deputies should understand facts, before indulging in slogans"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] 'Abdol-Hoseyn Moqtada'i, Majles deputy of the people of Abadan, who is also a member of the Majles Oil Committee, said in an interview with a parliamentary correspondent of ABRAR: The Servants of Construction and the coalition of the Imam's Line will cooperate in the fifth Majles.

He added: Even if the two groups were to support each other to elect a speaker for the Majles, still it seems unlikely that they might form a new coalition. However, one must admit that the two groups are moving along the same direction, and it is possible that the Militant Clergy Association [MCA: Jameh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez] may not agree with the line of thought pursued by these two groups. Adoption of such a stance by the MCA would pave the way for closer cooperation between the two said groups. [passage omitted]

Mr. Moqtada'i, addressing the deputies of the Fifth Majles, said: Before indulging in slogans, the deputies should understand the facts in the country. They should explain these facts to the people when the time is right. If we delay the explanation of the necessary facts, we will face crises and countless difficulties. To some extent our present economic crisis is the result of our earlier delay. We did not move in time to explain the facts to the people. In fact our slogans overtook our deeds.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Cites India as Reason Not To Stop Nuclear Program

BK0205143096 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said Pakistan's nuclear program has the protection of the people of Pakistan and there cannot be any compromise on this. The prime minister was addressing the officers who were attending the war and national defense course at the National Defense College in Islamabad this morning. This prestigious function was attended among others by the president of Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo Group, Mr. Hamid Nasir Chatha; defense minister, Mr. Aftab Shaban Mirani; Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali; interior minister, Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar; provincial governors and chief minister. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the three services chiefs were also present on the occasion. The prime minister spoke at length on her vision of a future Pakistan. On the Pakistan-India relation, the prime minister said India fuels an arms race in the region by spending billions on maintaining an aggressive military posture and Pakistan cannot afford to lower its guard against the Indian threat.

[Begin recording] As long as more than half a million troops crush the people of Kashmir with extreme brutality, we in Pakistan cannot lower our guard against the Indian threats. New Delhi's expanding nuclear arsenal and development of sophisticated delivery system continues to pose a serious threat to the stability of this region. Pakistan does not wish to enter into an arms race with India and we have made a series of constructive proposals to prevent nuclear proliferation in the region. We have repeatedly warned India and the international community of the perils of starting competition in missile technology, but it must be known that we cannot disarm unilaterally, nor can we shut down our nuclear program without a regional nuclear regime. We can safeguard our sovereignty only by keeping our options open. This means hardship to our people through high defense expenditure, which we honestly would like to avoid but we cannot and will not surrender our independence to satisfy India's outdated bid for power projection nor shall we ever place ourselves in a situation of nuclear blackmail. [end recording]

The prime minister reiterated unequivocal support to the Kashmir cause and said the Indian move to hold elections in the occupied valley is further evidence that it is not prepared to sit around the table with Pakistan to find out a peaceful solution of the dispute. These elections have categorically been rejected by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, which is a representative body of Kashmiris of all political belief.

Referring to the national issue, the prime minister said political problems cannot be resolved through use of force and parliament is the best forum to settle the score. The government and the opposition must work out a national agenda reflecting issues of national consensus.

[Begin recording] The shortcomings in a democratic process cannot be overcome merely through legislation. Democracy relies heavily on the political parties evolving appropriate rules of the game. The parliamentary framework provides for vast flexibility to conduct formal and informal consultation on matters of national concern. Successful democracies delineate areas of national importance, which transcend parties and politics. There are areas of cooperation as indeed of contention. This leaves a great deal of turf, which can still be legitimately fought over for political advantage. My repeated offers to the opposition to enter into a constructive dialogue with the government are inspired by this very desire. I believe in need to work out a national agenda reflecting issues of national consensus. [end recording]

PTV representative M.Z. Suhail reports that during the course of her speech spreading over an hour, she spoke at length on Pakistan's relations with the United States, Russia and China and prevailing international scenario. Giving a detailed resume of her internal policies, she said they are meant to bring about a qualitative change and improve the standard of living of the people.

Pakistan: Bhutto Comments on U.S., PRC, Russia Ties, Afghan Situation

BK0205161596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has unequivocally stated that Pakistan cannot shut down its nuclear program without a regional nuclear regime. She was addressing participants of war and national defense courses at the National Defense College in Islamabad this morning on her vision of the future of Pakistan. [passage omitted]

Addressing Pakistan-U.S. relations, the prime minister said there has been significant improvement in bilateral relations following the Brown Amendment. She said that during the period when sanctions were imposed on Pakistan by the Pressler Amendment, India had considerably increased the already unbalanced military situation in South Asia.

The prime minister said China shares our perception of developments in the region and in the world at large. China supports a peaceful solution to the Kashmir dispute based on the UN Security Council resolutions and the Simla Agreement.

Regarding Pakistan-Russia ties, the prime minister said Russia regards Pakistan's present government as a moderate force that is working for peace and stability in the region.

On the Afghan situation, the prime minister said Pakistan supports the proposal of a Security Council resolution that would place a total embargo on further military supplies to Afghanistan. Restoration of peace in Afghanistan is a matter of vital importance for Pakistan. She said Pakistan strongly supports the ongoing efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference to help establish a broad-based government in Afghanistan.

Referring to Pakistan's economic program and progress in the social sector, the prime minister said that economic reforms have resulted in international financial institutions gaining confidence in Pakistan. The budget deficit has been brought down from 8 percent to 4.8 percent. Government borrowings have been reduced, thus reducing the current account deficit in the gross domestic product from 7.14 percent to 3.97 percent.

The prime minister repeated the call to the opposition to hold talks on the national agenda reflecting issues of national consensus. She said that this is an issue on which the government and the opposition should help one another. She said that the emerging social infrastructure has led to the creation of a political class that involves all four provinces, capable of making fundamental decisions on the country's affairs.

Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo Group President Hamid Nasir Chatha, defense and interior ministers, provincial governors and chief ministers, chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, and the three services chiefs were also present during the prime minister's speech.

Pakistan: Bhutto Article Appeals to World Community for Political Aid

BK0205143496 Karachi DAWN in English 2 May 96 p 9

[Article by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto: "Cooperation, Not Bombs"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Last Sunday, more than 50 of my countrymen lost their lives in the cold-blooded bombing of a bus on the eve of 'Id-al-Adha one of the most important feasts in the Muslim calendar.

Women and children burned to death, and witnesses were unable to approach the shattered vehicle for hours because of the extreme heat. It was a senseless tragedy that leaves us wondering about the kind of world we live in.

Although we do not know the identity of those responsible for this heinous act, the preliminary findings indicate that it might have been from outside the country and externally sponsored. It may have been an effort by enemies of Pakistan to step up activity in the important province of Punjab.

The ultimate irony is that this comes at a time when all the nations of the world should be overcoming differences and learning to cooperate in the quest for peace and economic prosperity.

It has been more than four decades since the last great war tore the globe apart and led to a world carved into competing ideological camps. Economic interests took a back seat to cold war competition, as Soviets and Americans used developing nations as pawns on a global chessboard.

But, as the Berlin Wall crumbled and the nations of the world were freed from their ideological prisons, real cooperation for economic prosperity became a viable option. Nations have joined in regional alliances that allow them to enlarge their markets, more rationally divide labour, pool research and development resources, and generate a higher investible surplus.

One only has to look as far as the European Union and ASEAN to see the potential benefits of this type of cooperation. And, recently, trade alliances such as NAFTA, APEC, ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and others have continued this trend.

But the success of regional alliances depends on the promotion of a common interest, mutual confidence and a spirit of equality among big and small neighboring states - the type of brotherhood that can be so easily shattered by a terrorist's explosives.

We must also remember that regionalisation can also be used as a barrier to change as peace, when nations organize to insulate themselves from the salutary impact of globalism. One need only look at that so-called co-prosperity Sphere Imperial Japan used as justification for its invasion of Manchuria before World War II to understand that regionalism can serve as a cover for hegemony.

We must not let these potential dangers deter us from our attempts to build successful regional alliances, however. The economic well-being of our people is too important for such fears.

In addition, the very economic cooperation we should be seeking to promote can help lead to greater regional security. The ASEAN economic alliances, for instance, led inevitably to the Asian Regional Forum, which has greatly enhanced the peace and stability in Southeast Asia, an area only recently mired in bloodshed.

This success should serve as an example for the two organizations to which Pakistan belongs, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation [SAARC] and the Economic Cooperation Organization.

Unfortunately, while ECO is a model of successful interaction, as member states as disparate as Turkey and Iran work to overcome their differences, the SAARC continues to be a battleground of political posturing. The denial of the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir casts a dark shadow on the efforts to promote economic cooperation. And with the recent tragedy, it will be even harder to build the trust and good faith that such cooperation requires.

Ever when agreement exists, the most basic problem - lack of necessary funds - presents itself. In short, although a wide range of ideas is on the table in both organizations, the means to set these proposals into action lie beyond our grasp.

In ECO, where there are only minor political problems, the planned creation of such useful infrastructure as an integrated communication network, energy pipelines and other joint ventures lack the necessary capital to get them off the ground.

It is necessary, then, for the more prosperous nations of the globe to ask themselves: Would the European Union have been able to make progress without the earlier years of patronage from the United States? Could ASEAN have been the success it is without Japan's stable hand?

Surely, the nations encompassing ECO and SAARC are of equal importance to regional and global peace and prosperity. Side by side, the world must assist us to overcome our political problems — problems that, once solved, will help us create a world where the bombing of innocents is a thing of the past.

Pakistan: Bhutto Comments on Bomb Blasts in Punjab

BK0305040596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said the purpose of bomb blasts in Punjab is aimed at creating law and order situation to disrupt normal political activities. In an article published in the GULF NEWS, she said preliminary investigation has revealed the support of foreign involvement in these terrorist acts. Describing these blasts as most tragic, in which many precious and innocent lives have been lost, she said these inhuman acts should be condemned in the strongest terms by all, irrespective of political affiliations. The prime minister said it is more unfortunate in the wake of ongoing global efforts that are being made to maintain peace and normalcy for the economic well-being of the masses.

Pakistan: Nawaz Criticizes PPP for Failure To Stop Terrorists

BK0205131996 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 2 May 96 p 12

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE: Opposition Leader Nawaz Sharif has said the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government should inform the masses about foreign hand behind the recent bomb blasts in Lahore.

Talking to newsmen at Services and Mayo hospitals while visiting the injured of Phool Nagar bus bomb blast, Nawaz said that intelligence agencies should protect people from terrorists instead of preparing reports on opposition members' activities.

He said the PPP government had failed to provide security to the people and law and order situation in the country was not satisfactory. He said Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was claiming she had controlled the situation in Karachi and would also control in Punjab but, he added that the things were otherwise and law and order situation was alarming in Punjab.

Nawaz said there was no moral justification for PPP government to stay in office after Saturday's bomb blast. He said the opposition was avoiding any bloody movement to oust the corrupt PPP government so that there should be no unrest in Pakistan.

Nawaz met 10 bomb blast victims at Services hospital and eight at Mayo hospital. He inquired about the incident to which they said that fire engulfed the entire bus after the blast and they were stuck in the bus. He distributed Rs [rupees] 5,000 each among the injured and asked them to contact him if they need more.

Pakistan: Spokesman Says U.S. Terrorism Report 'Vindication'

BK0205132396 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 2 May 96 p 1

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: "It is a vindication of our stand" a Foreign Office spokesman commented Wednesday on the US State Department's annual report on "Patterns Of Global Terrorism for 1995."

The spokesman, when asked to comment on the report, made it clear that he had not seen it yet, but added, "it justifies our long-standing principled stand against terrorism."

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Holds Talks With French Official

BK0305050196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 3 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The visiting secretary general of the French Foreign Ministry, (Bertrand Dufour), had a meeting with the minister for foreign affairs, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, and discussed matters of common concern to both the countries, including international and regional issues. During the meeting held in Islamabad yesterday, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali briefed the French officials on the latest situation in occupied Kashmir, as well as, the massive violations of human rights being carried out by the Indian troops. He also apprised him of Pakistan's desire to maintain tension free and good neighborly relations with all countries, including India.

Besides, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali briefed (Mr. Dufour) on latest situation in Afghanistan and informed him of Pakistan's policy of noninterference in the affairs of Afghanistan and its desire to see restoration of peace and tranquility in that country. Discussions were also held on various cultural events planned to be held in France in connection with the 50th anniversary celebration of Pakistan next year.

(Mr. Dufour) is on a two-day visit to Pakistan for bilateral consultations between the two countries. The latest round of bilateral consultations between Pakistan and France took place in Paris in October 1994.

Pakistan: India Continues 'Brutal' Kashmir Operations

BK0205141696 Islamdbad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 2 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, various organizations of government employees have assured the All Parties Hurriyat Conference that they will not do anything which may weaken the liberation movement. The assurance came in the wake of increasing pressure of the Indian administration on the government employees threatening them of dismissal if they refuse to perform polling duties.

Meanwhile, Indian troops continued brutal operations killing nine more people at various places. These men were gunned down by troops in Kathua District of Jammu region. The troops have let loose a reign of terror in Laulab, Tripura, and Rajwar in Kupwara District. Hindwara town is on protest strike against the brutalities of troops. The mujahideen clashed with troops in Islamabad District killing and injuring a number of troops. The clash took place during military siege. Three mujahideen were martyred while the rest of the mujahideen broke through the siege to safety.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: President Outlines Jaffna Rehabilitation Efforts

BK0305015796 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 3 May 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga on Thursday [2 May] told diplomats and relief agencies that the government is launching a massive rehabilitation program in the Jaffna peninsula and requested involvement and backing.

The President who addressed them at the Presidential Secretariat said rehabilitation work has already commenced with the assistance of the army and it would be intensified.

"The government's aim is to restore normal civilian administration in the peninsula as soon as possible," she said.

She said 460 public servants and 180 pensioners will form the nucleus of the rehabilitation effort and added that the line ministries involved in the rehabilitation work have also sent their staff to Jaffna to co-ordinate and expedite the restoration of services.

The President said 40 doctors and other hospital staff have returned to the Jaffna Teaching Hospital and the hospital is now in a position to recommence activities.

She said over 200,000 civilians have returned to the Valikamam division and the food situation is under control.

She told the diplomats and relief agencies that in addition to the emergency relief program, a long term development program has also been planned, as the northern region had long been neglected.

She said a detailed development plan had been prepared during the period the government was talking to the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and it needed to be fine tuned to suit the current situation. Donor and relief agencies were associated with the government in the preparation of that program.

She said donor nations had promised support for the reconstruction plan when it was brought to their notice during the Aid Group meeting held in early 1995.

The President said it was the government's view that the development of the North should be embarked on immediately. Detailed plans will be made available to friendly governments and international agencies, the President said, and expressed confidence that they would provide support for this massive effort undertaken by the government.

She said the government would enter into a dialogue with the people of the North on the devolution proposals, the very people who will be affected by the settlement but who were denied the opportunity of expressing their opinion so far.

"By returning to the areas controlled by the government, these civilians have effectively rejected the LTTE's claim to decide the fate of the Tamil people", President Kumaratunga said.

She hoped the Opposition would co-operate with the government to enable a durable settlement to the ethnic problem and expressed confidence that the larger section of the people would support the government's proposals at a referendum.

The President also told the diplomats that Operation Riviresa Two was conducted by the military to facilitate the return of the civilians who had been forcibly sent away from the Valikamam division to return to their homes.

"The objective has been fully achieved and around 200,000 persons who had returned are being resettled", the President said.

She thanked the diplomatic community for the support it had given and the relief agencies for carrying out relief measures in the North. She also thanked the international community for the consistent support that had been provided to her government over the past months in their respective capitals which had helped the government to effectively combat the LTTE's politics of terror.

Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, Irrigation, Power and Energy Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte, Construction Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva who heads the Northern Rehabilitation Task Force and Posts and Communication Minister Mangala Samaraweera were associated with the President.

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